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Concept Art, Digital & Matte Painting Magazine

Issue 038 February 2009

MAREK OKOŃ

From web designer to one of the most talented artists around to day, **Marek Okoń** graces the pages of this month's 2DArtist with some visual treats!



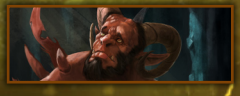
Interviews

Chen Lin (aka wanbao) & Marek Okoń



Articles

'Wheelman' Concept Art



Galleries

Ioan Dumitrescu, Geoffrey Cramm, Tymoteusz Chliszcz, plus more!



Tutorials

NEW!!! Vehicle Painting Tutorial Series by Dwayne Vance & Tham Hoi Mun, plus more!



Making Ofs

'Robot' by Nicolas Villeminot



Editorial

Welcome to **Issue 38** from a soggy, post snow-covered England. Not even the snow can stop us bringing another content-packed issue your way, so let's get stuck in! What have we got for you this month? Well, we have a treat for you actually, and this is one that I've been looking forward to for a long time: none other than an interview with the amazingly talented Polish artist, **Marek Okoń**, who has kindly taken some time out this month to chat to the 2DArtist team. Marek tells us all about how he went from web design to book cover art, to illustrations for comics and games. I always find myself having to catch my breath when a new artwork from Marek arrives on my screens, and I hope that you will be as stunned by the portfolio of work that is waiting for you on **page 19**. This month's issue also has an interview with Chinese artist, **Chen Lin (aka Wanbao)**, who discovered digital painting just 4 years ago but has managed to rack up a beautiful collection of imagery. Check out **page 7** for our interview with Chen Lin and get yourself inspired!

As a special addition to this month's magazine we have an article written for 2DArtist by the guys at Midway Newcastle, on the concept artwork done for new game title, *Wheelman*. Here you'll find the works of **Peter Thompson**, **John Steele** and **Corlen Kruger** – check out **page 37** and go behind the scenes to the original artwork created for this 2009 game title!

We also have yet another new tutorial series for you this month – this time: vehicle concept design, painting and rendering by **Dwayne Vance** and **Tham Hoi Mun**. These two artists are both specialists in the field of vehicle concepts and we welcome to 2DArtist to teach us a thing or two about how to design and polish up some stunning motors! Dwayne is going to be tacking a super sleek car, whilst Mun has been given the task of creating a heavy futuristic mechanical digger type thing – he's got his work cut out for him, but he dove right into this tutorial and has come up with some fantastic thumbnails on **page 73**. Mun is using good old marker pens and paper, and Dwayne is using a combination of Painter, the freeware Alchemy, and Photoshop to show us some different ways of concepting in this first chapter – next month will cover Dwayne refining this month's designs, so there's plenty to come from these two over the next few months!

Justin Albers is back with us again this month – we just can't get enough of his amazing ability to turn our tricky speed painting briefs into the most stunning illustrations! Prepare to be impressed by this month's interpretation of the rather open brief: *The size of the task ahead was extremely daunting*. We also had in-house artist, **Richard Tilbury** tackle the same topic for us this month, and the results of the two are intriguingly different – check them out on **page 81**. **Chee Ming Wong** is also back again with a rather wonderful painting of a space station … which he then blows up before our very eyes! Check out the latest from Chee on **page 89**.

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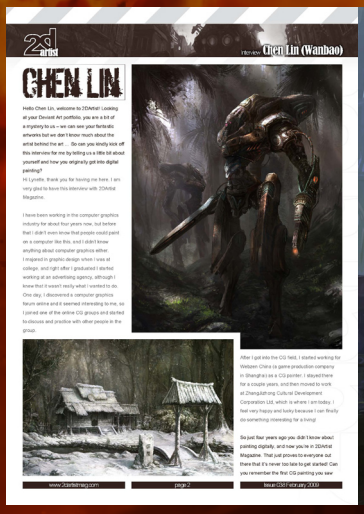
Finally, our making of this month has been created by **Nicolas Villeminot** on previous gallery featured image, *Robot*. You won't want to miss this one as Nicolas has put together a beautiful article showing the stages of creation right from the early sketches through to the refined line work and showing the different stages of colouring. A very intricately painted piece with a beautiful concept – check out **page 103**.

Well that's it for this month. Enjoy and see you next time for more! **Ed.**

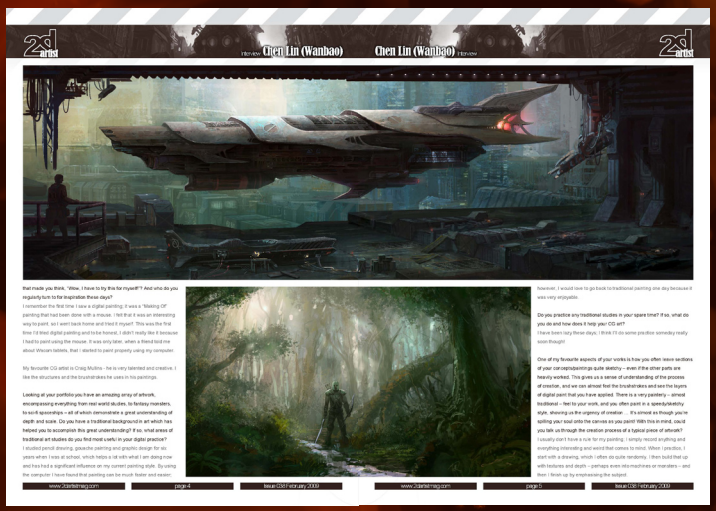


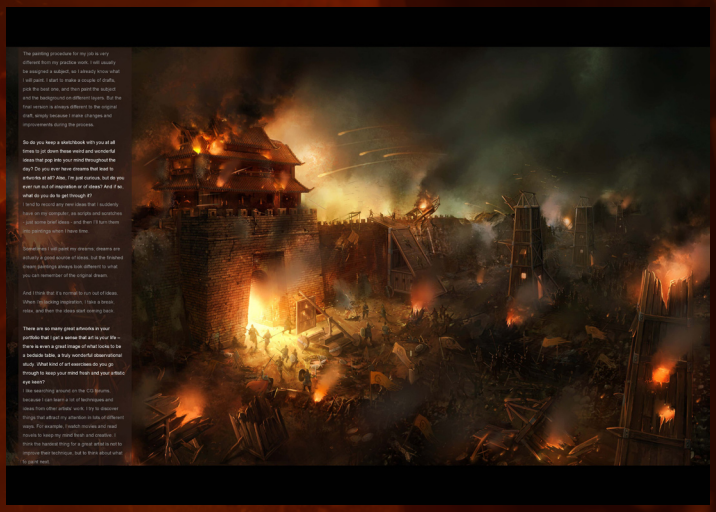
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To view the many double-page spreads featured in 2DArtist magazine, you can set the reader to display 'two-up', which will show double-page spreads as one large landscape image:

1. Open the magazine in Reader;
2. Go to the View menu, then Page display;
3. Select Two-up Continuous, making sure that Show Cover Page is also selected.

Contributing Artists

Every month, many artists around the world contribute to 3DCreative & 2DArtist magazines. Here you can read all about them. If you would like to be a part of 3DCreative or 2DArtist Magazines, please contact:

lynette@3dtotal.com



Richard Tilbury



Has had a passion for drawing since being a couple of feet tall. He studied fine art & was eventually led into the realm of computers several years ago. His brushes have slowly been dissolving in white spirit since the late nineties & now his graphics tablet has become their successor. He still sketches regularly and balances his time between 2D & 3D, although drawing will always be closest to his heart.

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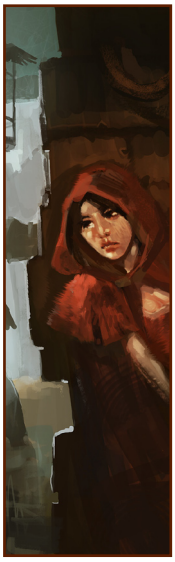


Dr CM Wong

Has over 8 years of creative visualisation and pre-production experience, having worked on various independent game projects, publications and CGI pre-production artwork. He is currently the CEO of his own digital art studio, Opus Artz, based in London. Previous work includes his role as senior concept artist and visual lead for *Infinity: The Quest for Earth MMO 2009*, plus numerous commercial publications.

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Justin Albers



A graduate of the Art Institute of Dallas and currently working as a concept artist at Vigil Games on the *Warhammer 40,000* MMO in Austin, Texas. His previous companies include TKO Software and NCsoft.

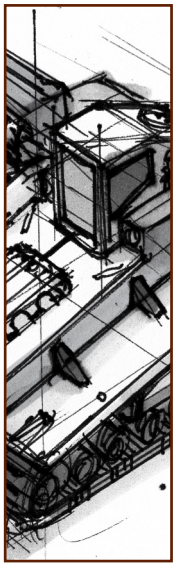
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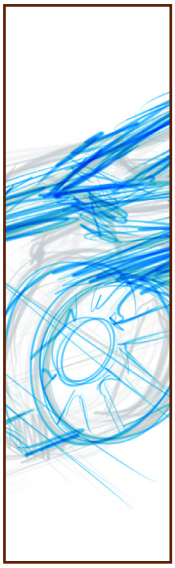


Tham Hoi Mun

The early *Star Wars* trilogy really got him into wanting to become a concept artist. He graduated from art school in 2006 and has been working in the field as a concept artist for almost 3 years. He spent time working for a production studio and is now a full-time freelancer. He's worked on several projects which include games, commercials, animations, and toys, and would love to teach someday.

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Dwayne Vance



Has worked professionally as a designer for companies such as Mattel on *Hot Wheels* and has also designed protective gear for Troy Lee Designs. Now he has his own company called FutureElements and creates work for the motorsports, entertainment and auto industries. He also has his own line of hot rod art which is influenced by his concept design background.

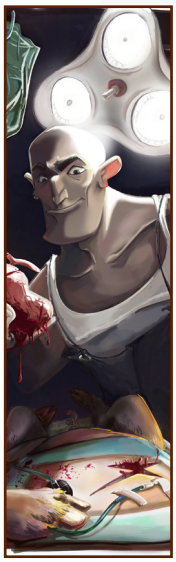
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Ruth Martinez

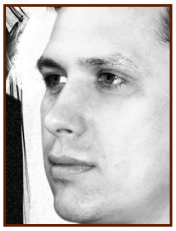
Studied graphic design, but always felt attracted to illustration and animation. She's currently working as a 2D animator in the game industry, and is happy to be working professionally in her hobby. She also pursues her passion for illustration through the likes of the 2DArtist stylised challenges!

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János Kiss



Designs identities, brochures, flyers and illustrations at a small company in Budapest, Hungary. As well as graphic design, he works to improve his digital painting, usually working with Painter and ArtRage. His current goal is to develop his portfolio, experimenting with several styles and techniques

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Oriol Muñoz Anguera

A graffiti artist of The Petados Crew from Barcelona and surrounding areas. He's currently working as a production/concept artist for 2D and 3D games, and manages to make time for his own personal projects in his free time. His motto is: "Love Walls!"

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Nicolas Villeminot



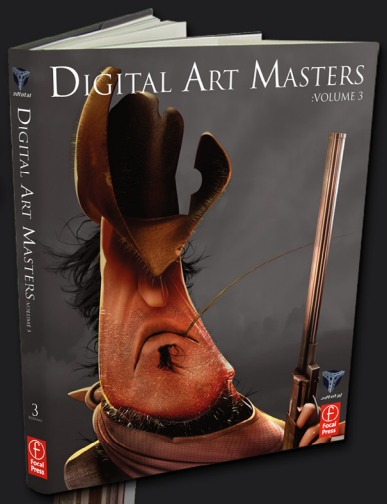
A self-taught artist living in France who has always been in love with drawing and illustration. He has worked for many years in the videogame field as a 2D and 3D artist and is currently working on a children's book project. He usually works both on paper and on computer, and has recently been featured in Ballistic Publishing's Exposé 6.

http://electronico.cgsociety.org/gallery/
nicolas.villeminot@orange.fr



Image by Chen Lin

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CHEN LIN

"I tend to record any new ideas that I suddenly have on my computer, as scripts and scratches - just some brief ideas - and then I'll turn them into paintings when I have time"

Chen Lin, aka Wanbao, is a very talented artist based in China, who only discovered digital painting four years ago, and has made amazing progress since his early days of using a mouse. We got the chance to know Chen Lin a little better in this month's issue of 2DArtist, so read on to find out more about the artist behind the Wacom!

CHEN LIN



Hello Chen Lin, welcome to 2DArtist! Looking at your Deviant Art portfolio, you are a bit of a mystery to us – we can see your fantastic artworks but we don't know much about the artist behind the art … So can you kindly kick off this interview for me by telling us a little bit about yourself and how you originally got into digital painting?

Hi Lynette, thank you for having me here. I am very glad to have this interview with 2DArtist Magazine.

I have been working in the computer graphics industry for about four years now, but before that I didn't even know that people could paint on a computer like this, and I didn't know anything about computer graphics either.
I majored in graphic design when I was at college, and right after I graduated I started working at an advertising agency, although I knew that it wasn't really what I wanted to do.
One day, I discovered a computer graphics forum online and it seemed interesting to me, so I joined one of the online CG groups and started to discuss and practice with other people in the group.



After I got into the CG field, I started working for Webzen China (a game production company in Shanghai) as a CG painter. I stayed there for a couple years, and then moved to work at ZhangJizhong Cultural Development Corporation Ltd, which is where I am today. I feel very happy and lucky because I can finally do something interesting for a living!

So just four years ago you didn't know about painting digitally, and now you're in 2DArtist Magazine. That just proves to everyone out there that it's never too late to get started! Can you remember the first CG painting you saw


http://wanbao.deviantart.com/



that made you think, “Wow, I have to try this for myself!”? And who do you regularly turn to for inspiration these days?

I remember the first time I saw a digital painting; it was a “Making Of” painting that had been done with a mouse. I felt that it was an interesting way to paint, so I went back home and tried it myself. This was the first time I’d tried digital painting and to be honest, I didn’t really like it because I had to paint using the mouse. It was only later, when a friend told me about Wacom tablets, that I started to paint properly using my computer.

My favourite CG artist is Craig Mullins - he is very talented and creative. I like the structures and the brushstrokes he uses in his paintings.



Looking at your portfolio you have an amazing array of artwork, encompassing everything from real world studies, to fantasy monsters, to sci-fi spaceships – all of which demonstrate a great understanding of depth and scale. Do you have a traditional background in art which has helped you to accomplish this great understanding? If so, what areas of traditional art studies do you find most useful in your digital practice?

I studied pencil drawing, gouache painting and graphic design for six years when I was at school, which helps a lot with what I am doing now and has had a significant influence on my current painting style. By using the computer I have found that painting can be much faster and easier;





however, I would love to go back to traditional painting one day because it was very enjoyable.

Do you practice any traditional studies in your spare time? If so, what do you do and how does it help your CG art?

I have been lazy these days; I think I'll do some practice someday really soon though!

One of my favourite aspects of your works is how you often leave sections of your concepts/paintings quite sketchy – even if the other parts are heavily worked. This gives us a sense of understanding of the process of creation, and we can almost feel the brushstrokes and see the layers of digital paint that you have applied. There is a very painterly – almost traditional – feel to your work, and you often paint in a speedy/sketchy style, showing us the urgency of creation … It's almost as though you're spilling your soul onto the canvas as you paint! With this in mind, could you talk us through the creation process of a typical piece of artwork?

I usually don't have a rule for my painting; I simply record anything and everything interesting and weird that comes to mind. When I practice, I start with a drawing, which I often do quite randomly. I then build that up with textures and depth – perhaps even into machines or monsters – and then I finish up by emphasising the subject.

The painting procedure for my job is very different from my practice work. I will usually be assigned a subject, so I already know what I will paint. I start to make a couple of drafts, pick the best one, and then paint the subject and the background on different layers. But the final version is always different to the original draft, simply because I make changes and improvements during the process.

So do you keep a sketchbook with you at all times to jot down these weird and wonderful ideas that pop into your mind throughout the day? Do you ever have dreams that lead to artworks at all? Also, I'm just curious, but do you ever run out of inspiration or of ideas? And if so, what do you do to get through it?

I tend to record any new ideas that I suddenly have on my computer, as scripts and scratches - just some brief ideas - and then I'll turn them into paintings when I have time.

Sometimes I will paint my dreams; dreams are actually a good source of ideas, but the finished dream paintings always look different to what you can remember of the original dream.

And I think that it's normal to run out of ideas. When I'm lacking inspiration, I take a break, relax, and then the ideas start coming back.

There are so many great artworks in your portfolio that I get a sense that art is your life – there is even a great image of what looks to be a bedside table, a truly wonderful observational study. What kind of art exercises do you go through to keep your mind fresh and your artistic eye keen?

I like searching around on the CG forums, because I can learn a lot of techniques and ideas from other artists' work. I try to discover things that attract my attention in lots of different ways. For example, I watch movies and read novels to keep my mind fresh and creative. I think the hardest thing for a great artist is not to improve their technique, but to think about what to paint next.







What has been your favourite art creation to date, and for what reasons does it make you feel proud?

I had a couple of paintings that I really liked before, but now I feel that they are just “okay”. However, I will certainly try to do better and better in the future!

You’ve had some amazing feedback from other members of the DeviantArt community. How important do you find the digital art communities in your progression as an artist? Are there any other communities that you actively participate in, apart from the one over at DeviantArt?

An art community is a platform for artists to discuss, to learn, and to show off their talents. I have made lot of friends from these art communities and I would actually say that it was art communities that brought me into the CG industry in the first place. I have joined many art communities in China, and I have posted a lot of my work on their websites, but I have been very busy lately and find it harder to update them with my new works.

Sure, I totally understand that. So let’s go back to when you were first starting out. How did you go about putting your first digital painting portfolio together to demonstrate your skills? Do you have any tips and advice for other artists out there who are just starting out and can’t quite decide on what they should focus on for their portfolio?

For my portfolio, I simply put in the artworks that I liked, nothing fancy. I started to decide what I really wanted to do a year after I graduated, so I think it’s never too late to make a decision or change your career goal. You don’t have to ask for too much advice from other people; you will have the answer yourself someday after you’ve tried lots of different things!







Chen Lin (Wanbao)

For more work by this artist please visit:

http://wanbao.deviantart.com/

Or contact them at:

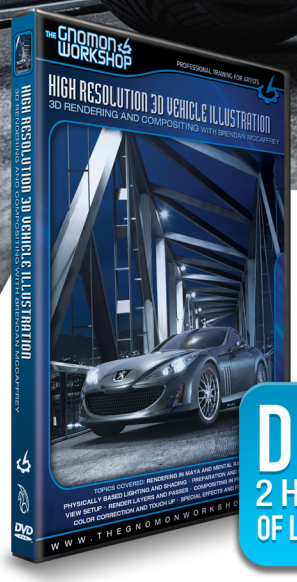
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"If you have to explain to people what the image is all about then the image fails, as it should speak for itself. That's why I never describe my images, nor answer any story-related questions. What you see is what you get and if you don't see what I wanted to show you, then it's my fault as my visual messages obviously weren't clear enough"

MAREK OKON

Although he's first and foremost an artist, Marek Okon is also a storyteller. A great believer in the narrative power of art, he took his first steps into the professional world of 2D art by working on book covers for a local publisher. Later he branched out into comics and concept art, and now he has the elusive games industry firmly in his sights.

MAREK OKON



Hi Marek and welcome to the pages of 2DArtist! Now it's become a bit of a tradition for us to kick off interviews by asking the artist to introduce themselves, so can you start by telling us about who you are, how you broke into the world of 2D art and what you get up to on a daily basis?

Hi there! My name is Marek Okon, I'm 27 years old, I was born in beautiful Poland and it's where I live to date. I treated drawing like a hobby for most of my life, until a few years ago when I started to think about it more seriously. It began when I was working as a web designer and flash animator. Yeah I know, not much related to drawing, but during that time I got to know Photoshop very well and I learnt how to work with demanding clients.

My first commercial painting job was a book cover for a local publisher. They liked what I did and ordered more covers. After showing those images in my portfolio, more clients showed up and things started snowballing.

Right now most of my job is doing illustrations for comics, books and games. I'm also doing some concept designing and in the future I would like to focus on that. I think it's important to keep trying new things - to keep your brain open to new ideas.

Yeah, I noticed a lot of book covers in your gallery – particularly for fantasy books – and I guess that explains why! How did you fall into this kind of work and how does the whole thing work? Are you given a strict brief, or do you have the artistic license to do pretty much what you want, within reason of course!

My first client, the local book publisher Fabryka Slow, is famous for its fantasy-oriented novels, so that's why most of my work is from that area. But right now I'm really doing pretty much every topic there is, from Victorian dress designs to



Hide and Seek | Client: Imagine FX Magazine





Hostile Takeover | Client: Fabryka Slow

zombies, cyber marines and huge robots. As I said I like doing new things every time I get the chance.

As for briefs it really depends on the client. Some of them just giving me rough guidelines, giving me freedom with the details, others on the other hand have really clear visions about what they want from me, down to character design, poses, props placement and so on.

For some reason, I've got an image of a zombie in a Victorian dress in my head now … [Laughs]. It must be amazing to be able to walk into a bookshop and see something that you've created on the shelf. Of the two different client approaches that you mentioned, which way do you prefer to work? Being given the freedom to experiment or being guided by a brief? And which do you think produces the best art?
That really depends on the clients! [Laughs]. At first glance, one giving you complete freedom sounds better, but if you cooperate with a client that knows what he wants you can end up with ideas that you couldn't think of by yourself. And that's how you grow as an artist; you learn from others, gain new experiences and try to use them while working on your next image.

Now strangely enough, yours was actually one of the very first pieces of artwork that I stumbled across when I started working for 3DTotal. I was poking around in the free wallpaper section on our site and I discovered "Rain". The piece was so powerful that I immediately thought: "This has got to have a great story behind it", which seems to be a recurring theme in your work. So is there a story behind "Rain", or is that just my overactive imagination? And what about "Hide and Seek", which seems to be the ultimate story-based piece. How did that come about?
"Rain" definitely has a story behind it. As you may know, it's a piece that was done for a book cover and it's a loose interpretation of a scene from that book. Immediately after reading that passage I thought, "Now that's a great scene - people are gonna wonder what drove this





Return to NeonCity | Client: Fabryka Slow





Make me proud..| Client: Imagine FX Magazine

girl to this point in her life, when she's ready to risk it all to avoid being captured". And that's what I like about doing covers; you have to find that one scene that will intrigue people without revealing too much

"Hide and Seek" was my first commission for ImagineFX magazine and since I have a tremendous amount of respect for them and the amount of education they put into the community, I really wanted to do something special. And since people like this storytelling aspect in my images, I wanted to do a little puzzle, which if solved, will give the full story behind the image. It's really not that easy to put so many small details into an image, which contribute to some greater message, without forcing them upon viewer - but it's really worth the effort, even if only a few people will get all the clues.

Well you certainly achieved what you set out to do with "Rain", because that's exactly what I thought when I looked at it! I really like the idea of telling a story through an image; making images something more than just beautiful pictures to be admired for artistic technique alone. Do you ever ask for feedback on the pictures that you've built a story into, to see if people's interpretations match your own intentions for the piece?

I don't have to ask! People are always commenting on what they see in my pictures, sometimes asking me if they are right or what the meaning of a certain object in the image is. In my opinion, if you have to explain to people what the image is all about then the image fails, as it should speak for itself. That's why I never describe my images, nor answer any story-related questions. What you see is what you get and if you don't see what I wanted to show you, then it's my fault as my visual messages obviously weren't clear enough.

On the funny side, from time to time people's imaginations run wilder then mine, creating stories about my pictures that are way more





Escape from NeonCity | Client: Fabryka Slow





Snatch | Client: Imagine FX Magazine

complex and crazy than anything I could ever come up with … [Laughs]. It's really satisfying to spark someone's imagination like that!

I read that you tend to listen to music while you're painting. How much do the lyrics of a particular song shape what you're creating? Do you ever find that the music takes you in a different direction than you originally intended?
I'm not actually a big fan of songs, just instrumental music - so lyrics don't really play a part in my creation process. I do have a really big collection of soundtracks from movies though, and this is what I usually listen to while painting. I try to match the movie's style to the style of the painting; for example, "Hide and Seek" was done to music from *The Fountain* and *The Ring*, so it has the same dark, gloomy feelings that those soundtracks do.

There are a few exceptions though, the most noticeable one being "Apocalypse Please", which was solely inspired by an amazing Muse song by the same title. But in general, there are very few individual songs powerful enough to ignite my imagination.

Okay, so if not from songs, where does your inspiration come from?
I guess movies are my thing. I'm a rather visual person, so even if a movie's scenario is dumber than a horse's arse, I still might like it if it's well shot and has some dynamic action or a montage. I usually do the "one step further" thing when I see some action and think, "Wow, that's nice! But it would be even better if..." and that's the moment when I add some crazy complication or an epic environment to the scene, creating seeds for future images.

Now your gallery makes for particularly interesting viewing, as there's a clear transition between your earlier manga work and the fantastic digital art that you've been producing recently. Was it a conscious decision to move away from the manga style, or was it just the natural evolution of your art?





Follow me...| Client: Robert Marston Fanney



Rain | Client: Fabryka Slow

It was a conscious decision. I loved manga and thought that I didn't need anything else in order to be happy with my drawing, but when it came to actually doing it for living it became obvious that the market for manga was too small, especially in Poland. And since it was my childhood dream to work in the games industry, there was nothing else I could but switch to a more realistic style. And it was so worth it. I leaned that there is just so much more in paintings. I still do some manga sketches every now and then but it's usually just for myself now.

It sounds like you don't regret the fact that circumstances forced you to change your artistic style, despite your love of manga. So what I'm wondering is: if you got the chance to switch back again now, would you? Or have you fallen too much in love with realistic, digital art?

The best part of drawing realistically is that once you've mastered the technique, you don't really have to switch back. You can treat manga, or comic drawing, as a part of your casual drawing routine, just with slightly different principles. Composition, colour, volumes, tones - all those things have to be mastered in order to paint well, no matter what style you prefer. And while I think it's easy to switch from realistic to manga, the other way around is not a piece of cake, as you not only draw what you see but you also have to interpret it in a cool, cohesive way that is pleasing to the eye.

As for my personal preferences … a realistic style has much more to offer me, and there is still so much more for me to learn, so I doubt I'll leave it any time soon.

You mentioned that your childhood dream was to work in the games industry – do you feel that you've fulfilled this dream yet, or is this something that you're still working towards? And when you have achieved this goal, where do you see your life going?

If all goes well that dream should be fulfilled soon [Laughs]. I'm sorry but I really can't say anything else at this moment - I don't want to jinx it! I simply love the games industry; I've been playing games since forever and I'm really passionate about some of the titles out there. And hopefully one day I'll get the chance to work on my own game, although I know there's a long road ahead of me.

Well good luck with that dream Marek, and thanks for taking the time out to chat to us!

Marek Okon

For more work by this artist please visit:
http://omen2501.deviantart.com/
Or contact them at:
omen2501@gmail.com
Interviewed by: Jo Hargreaves



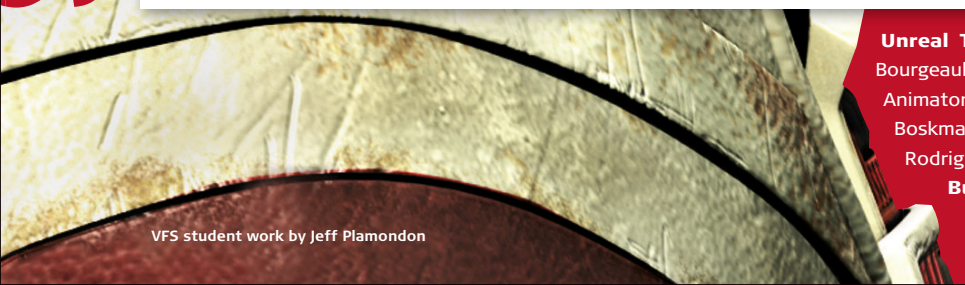
Vancouver Film School alumni credits include **Across the Universe** Geeta Basantani, Digital Compositor **Alias** Scott Dewis, Visual Effects Artist **Ant Bully** Ben Sanders, Character Animator | Rani Naamani, Animator | Ernesto Bottger, Character Animator **AVP: Alien Vs. Predator** Shawn Walsh, Color & Lighting Technical Director **Babel** Luis Blackaller, Storyboard Artist | Lon Molnar, Visual Effects Supervisor **Battlestar Galactica** Daniel Osaki, Lead Modeler | Megan Majewski, 3D Animator | Alec McClymont, 3D Artist **Blizzard Entertainment** Alvaro Buendia, Cinematic Artist **Bolt** Lino Di Salvo, Supervising Animator/Voice of Vinnie **Charlotte's Web** Aruna Inversin, Digital Compositor | Adam Yaniv, Character Animator | Tony Etienne, Lead Lighter Kristin Sedore, Lighter **Chicago** Lon Molnar, Animation Supervisor **The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe** Kristin Sedore, Lighter | Shawn Walsh, Lighter | Adam Yaniv, Character Animator **The Chronicles of Narnia: Prince Caspian** Andreas Hikel, Pre-Visualization Artist | Christoph Schinko, Character Animator | Jami Gigot, Senior Layout Artist **Cloverfield** Nicholas Markel, Pre-Visualization Supervisor **Constantine** Aruna Inversin, Digital Compositor **The Dark Knight** Pietro Ponti, Lead CG Lighting Artist **Dead Like Me** Daniel Osaki, Visual Effects Artist | Alec McClymont, 3D Artist **Diablo III** Alvaro Buendia, Cinematic Artist | Steven Chen, Cinematic Artist **Family Guy** Michael Loya, Storyboard Artist **Fantastic Four: Rise of the Silver Surfer** Arun Ram-Mohan, Lighting Technical Director | Shawn Walsh, Visual Effects Executive Producer | Jessica Alcorn, Compositor **Flags of our Fathers** Aruna Inversin, Digital Compositor **Gears of War (VG)** Scott Dossett, Animator **The Godfather (VG)** Kirk Chantraine, Motion Capture Specialist **The Golden Compass** Adam Yaniv, Animator | Chad Moffitt, Animator | Thom Roberts, Animator | Ben Sanders, Animator Andrew Lawson, Animator | Matthias Lowry, Visual Effects | Tony Etienne, Look Development Justin Hammond, Lighter Technical Director | Aruna Compositor | Fion Mok, Pearl Hsu, Effects Inversin, Digital Matchmove Artist **Hairspray** Lon Molnar, Visual Effects Production Executive **Halo 3** Bartek Kujbida, Character Animator **Happy Feet** Ben Sanders, Character Animator | Thom Roberts, Character Animator **Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban** Shawn Walsh, Color & Lighting Technical Director **Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix** Pietro Ponti, Technical Director **Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince** Harry Mukhopadhyay, Lead Effects Technical Director **Hellboy** Aruna Inversin, Digital Compositor **Hellboy II: The Golden Army** Christoph Ammann, 3D Sequence Supervisor **Horton Hears a Who** Arun Ram-Mohan, Lighting Technical Director | Brent Wong, Modeler **Hulk** Geoff Richardson, Visual Effects Editor **I, Robot** Daniel Osaki, CGI Modeler | Megan Majewski, Pre-Visualization **Ice Age: The Meltdown** Ben Sanders, Character Animator | Arun Ram-Mohan, Lighting Technical Director **The Incredible Hulk** Shawn Walsh, Visual Effects Executive Producer Tony Etienne, Look Development Lead **Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull** Henri Tan, Creature Technical Director **Iron Man** Adam Marisett, Visual Effects Artist **King Kong** Chad Moffitt, Senior Animator **King of the Hill** Michael Loya, Director **Kingdom Hospital** Daniel Osaki, Visual Effects Artist | Megan Majewski, 3D Animator | Alec McClymont, 3D Artist **Kingdom of Heaven** Shawn Walsh, Digital Compositor **Letters from Iwo Jima** Aruna Inversin, Digital Compositor **Live Free or Die Hard** Jessica Alcorn, Compositor **Lord of the Rings Trilogy** Chad Moffitt, Senior Animator **Lost** Scott Dewis, Visual Effects Artist **Lucasfilm Animation Singapore** Sandro Di Segni, Senior Effects Technical Director/Lead Digital Artist | Ming Chang, Lighting Technical Director | Adrian Ng Chee Wei, Character AnimatorSeema Gopalakrishnan, CG Software Developer **Mass Effect (VG)** Sung-Hun (Ryan) Lim, 3D Modeler **Matrix: Revolutions** Aruna Inversin, Digital Compositor | Shawn Walsh, Color & Lighting Technical Director **Master & Commander: The Far Side of the World** Robert Bourgeault, CG Artist **Metal Gear Solid 4 (VG)** Josh Herrig, Artist | Yuta Shimizu, Artist **The Mummy: Tomb of the Dragon Emperor** Aruna Inversin, Digital Compositor **Night at the Museum** Allen Holbrook, Animator | Adam Yaniv, Character Animator | Chad Moffitt, Animator | Kristin Sedore, Lighter **Persepolis** Marianne Lebel, Animator **Pirates of the Caribbean: At World's End** Ben Sanders, Character Animator Allen Holbrook, Animator | Aruna Inversin, Digital Compositor **The Pirates Who Don't Do Anything: A VeggieTales Movie** Mike Dharney, Animation Supervisor **Reign of Fire** Lino DiSalvo, Animator **Resident Evil: Extinction** Joshua Herrig, Visual Effects Artist **Robots** Arun Ram-Mohan, Additional Lighting **Rome** Teh-Wei Yeh, Matchmove Artist **The Santa Clause 2** Aruna Inversin, Digital Compositor Daniel Osaki, Visual Effects Artist **Scarface (VG)** Maya Zuckerman, Mocap 3D Generalist **Shrek the Third** Rani Naamani, Animator **Shrek the Third (VG)** Samuel Tung, Technical Artist **Sin City** Michael Cozens, Lead Animator **Smallville** Geeta Basantani, Lead Compositor **Speed Racer** Aruna Inversin, Digital Compositor **Star Wars Episode III: Revenge of the Sith** Andrew Doucette, Character Animator | Nicholas Markel, Pre-Visualization **Star Wars: Knights of the Old Republic (VG)** Arun Ram-Mohan, 3D Artist | Jessica Mih, Level Artist **Stargate SG-1** Aruna Inversin, Digital Compositing Artist | Daniel Osaki, Visual Effects Artist | Shawn Walsh, Digital Effects Supervisor **Stargate: Atlantis** Daniel Osaki, 3D Animator | Megan Majewski, 3D Animator | Alec McClymont, 3D Artist **Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street** Jami Gigot, Concept Artist **Transformers** Allen Holbrook, Animator | Henri Tan, Creature Technical Director

Your name here.

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"Working on Wheelman has been a real labour of love for all of the artists here at Midway Newcastle. It has been a homage to the Hollywood car chase and action film and we have had a lot of fun making it."
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Discover some of the amazing artwork that the guys over at Midway Newcastle have done on *Wheelman*, Vin Diesel's latest high octane video game



WHEELMAN
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Project Background

Wheelman is Midway Games's latest high profile game title for 2009. The game stars Vin Diesel as an undercover agent and highly skilled driver who must infiltrate the Barcelona underworld to gather intelligence surrounding a covert heist of international importance. Posing as a driver-for-hire, he ends up caught in a crossfire of corruption and chaos while trying to stay one step ahead of local law enforcement and rival gangs.



Midway Newcastle set out to create the ultimate car chase, complete with precision driving, stunts, and an edge-of-your seat story. The game is heavily influenced by some of the great Hollywood car chases seen in films like *Ronin*, the *Bourne* series, *Vanishing Point* and *Bullitt*, and will be out for Xbox 360, PS3 and PC in Q1 2009.



Foreword by Cumron Ashtiani

Studio Art Director at Midway Newcastle

Working on *Wheelman* has been a real labour of love for all of the artists here at Midway Newcastle. It has been a homage to the Hollywood car chase and action film and we have had a lot of fun making it.

Stylistically, working with a real life action star in a real world location has been quite a challenge, particularly when it came to finding the right balance of realism vs. stylisation.



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Corlen Kruger (**Fig.03**) - Drug Store Club – Hide out of the Chullos Canalas gang

The game features action that is on the edge of what is believable for a photo realistic art style; for example an elite driver who can spray bullets from his car while performing a 360 spin during a busy high speed car chase.

As a result, we have pushed past realism, creating a style that is based in reality but is very much in tune with a Hollywood movie where post effects, colour tints and CG sequences enable us to get away with more and suspend disbelief.

The game is set in a Hollywood representation of Barcelona that appears warm and vibrant on the surface, but underneath is rife with corruption and underworld criminal gangs at war with each other.

The talent we have in the studio, such as concept artists **Peter Thompson**, **John Steele** and **Corlen Kruger**, have made this all possible. They've enabled us to visualise everything we wanted to do with the game and to take that vision further with greater imagination.

In this article we have selected some key pieces of concept art that illustrate the thinking and some of the back story behind the art direction in *Wheelman*.

Location, Location, Location!

As with all great films and games, location is key, and for us, Barcelona contained everything we needed to make this game. The streets of Barcelona vary from narrow cobbled alleys, along which small cars can be driven at high speed, sending café tables and pedestrians barrelling over left, right and centre, to wide, open high streets and freeways, where high speed car chases with hordes of pursuing police can take place.

Barcelona is also creatively "clean", as I would put it. The city is not immediately associated with other films or games, such as London or Berlin. This meant that we could put our own stamp on it, making Barcelona the city that *Wheelman* is set in.

Finally, Barcelona has a certain romanticism and warmth, which goes well with our decision not to follow the main stream and make a brown and grey game. We wanted the game to be vibrant, and for people to feel that they are in a city that they want to drive around and explore.

Concept Art

Peter Thompson (**Fig.01**) – This concept was



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Exterior image (**Fig.04**)

all about capturing the moody look of a typical narrow Mediterranean alleyway; this consisted of many photo composites and heavy paint-over techniques to achieve the final look.

Corlen Kruger (**Fig.02**) **–** For this image I was tasked with creating a panoramic image of the Magmar Centre and also the adjoining area of Port Vell (The Marina). The key focus was to combine the two areas without it looking like two separate locations that we had merged together. By using a combination of key focal points, such as the Port Vell sign post and the large rectangular shape of the Magmar centre, I was able to create a convincing scenario.

Cumron Ashtiani: As well as creating known locations within Barcelona, we also had to create some fictitious scenes, mainly the gang hideouts and key mission locations. The intention was to create a contrast between the seemingly normal daytime of Barcelona and its seedy criminal underworld.

Corlen Kruger (**Fig.03**) – Drug Store Club – Hide out of the Chullos Canalas Gang – This fictitious club had to convey the mood of a run-down underground club, where the patrons could obtain more than just alcohol. Using a photograph of an empty warehouse, I built the image up, adding all the different components until the final look was achieved.

Exterior image (**Fig.04**) **–** Using 3D block-out as a starting point, I took the rendered image into Photoshop CS2 and added all the elements to achieve the run-down, slum-like location. All the elements, like the graffiti and grungy textures, were added in Photoshop.

Peter Thompson (**Fig.05**) – Church interior **–** An early concept of an abandoned Spanish church, this location changed considerably



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Peter Thompson (**Fig.05**) - Church interior



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Peter Thompson (Fig.06) - Subway construction

until the final mission design was approved for concept.

Cumron Ashtiani (Fig.05): In the final game, the church features as a showdown location where there is a huge gun fight which results in the player smashing through the priceless stained glass window. The church needed to be laid out in such a way that the pews and rubble could be used as cover whilst shooting.

Peter Thompson (Fig.06) – Subway construction – This started out as a rough speed painting which slowly evolved into a highly detailed conceptual piece. This is just another way of getting the ball rolling. Normally this would be achieved by using rough 3D block-out renders. The subway construction workers were added at a later date to achieve a sense of scale.

Character Design

Cumron Ashtiani (Fig.07 by Peter Thompson): Our main character, Milo Burik, pretty much evolved naturally out of his story profile of being an undercover agent, elite driver, and also being played by actor Vin Diesel. Vin comes with a history of top action films and his persona in each of these films influenced the design of Milo so clearly that we didn't have any trouble working out what he should look like.

Most of our conceptual design efforts went into the primary characters, such as Lumi Vega, whose script profile states that she is well-known in the Catalan underworld, both for her expertise as a thief and for her beauty and talent as a Flamenco dancer. She needed a strong, iconic look that would make her instantly recognisable as being a character from *Wheelman*.

(Fig.08 left to right) – Early designs weren't going in the right direction, but by sticking to a silhouette technique for quickly determining a striking shape, John Steele was able to find an angle.



© Midway Games
Peter Thompson (Fig.07)


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John Steele (Fig.08) – Lumi Vega Design

John Steele (**Fig.08**) – Lumi Vega Design – I mainly worked with our writer on the Lumi concept. We started off with the overall look based on the script and identified that Lumi had a scene involving riding a performance bike, hence the leather biker look. We went on from there to experiment with hints of colour with the red in the sash and the stitching in the pants. The image was worked up in detail through the progress of discussion and feedback.


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John Steele (Fig.09)

We then went on to work up the facial look (**Fig.09**), again through constant discussion and feedback as above.

Cumron Ashtiani (**Fig.09**)**:** Lumi needed to look tough, but also have a glint of vulnerability and femininity. In early drawings she had a more severe look, but through the process of iteration and feedback we found the right balance of vulnerability vs. independence.

Peter Thompson (**Fig.10**) – Lumi Vega – This final key art image of Lumi Vega started out as a 3D render that I then painted over to achieve a dynamic portrait of the character, using various effects and techniques in Photoshop CS3. I gave the model a cinematic pose (caught in mid-


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Peter Thompson (**Fig.10**) – Lumi Vega

action appearance) by using dynamic lighting, sparks, dirt and smoke.

Peter Thompson & Corlen Kruger (**Fig.11**) – Pole Dancer – After the pole dancer was designed, we placed the character in a nightclub environment to get a sense of the way artificial light and shadow would look in-game. The presence of Sorin Teodor in the background (the Romanian Cartel gangster) was added at a later date due to script changes, to add a sense of foreboding to the scene.



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Peter Thompson & Corlen Kruger (**Fig.11**) - Poledancer



Peter Thompson (Fig.12) - Bike combat concept

Using Concept Art to Illustrate Gameplay

Cumron Ashtiani: One of the most useful ways that we have used concept art is in the illustration of key gameplay moments and features. Rather than just verbally explaining to a team of artists, designers and programmers what a game feature will be like, we found that illustrating it ensures that everyone has the same picture in their minds.

From these images it is easy for a programmer to see what we will need and to point out any concerns or problems. Artists can also clarify that they have fully understood what the game designers have asked of them with an illustrative image.

Peter Thompson (Fig.12) – Bike Combat Concept – One of the early key art concepts for *Wheelman*, this piece was intended to capture the look and feel of our on bike combat and chases.

Located in the subways of Barcelona, Milo has to take out the thugs on bikes whilst manoeuvring through the underground system and dodging speeding subway trains.

Various simple block-out renders were made before the final composition was agreed upon. Once approved, this concept was taken to a heavily detailed finished state to capture the look of an authentic Barcelona underpass.

Corlen Kruger (Fig.13) – Subway Jump – The game designers gave me a rough in-game screenshot of an area that needed a concept paint-over of a ramp-like feature, where the player would be able to launch out of the subway to safety. I used a large amount of photo texture work to achieve the look of the concept.



Corlen Kruger (Fig.13) - Subway Jump



Peter Thompson (Fig.14)



Peter Thompson (Fig.15)

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Glossy Artwork to Inspire

Cumron Ashtiani (**Fig.14 – 15**)**:** As well as creating artwork to drive the internal development team, we also produced artwork to inspire and educate people about the project. Here is a selection of high quality concepts produced by **Peter Thompson** that capture the core ideas behind the project.



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Peter Thompson (**Fig.16**) - Marketing art

Each image was mastered at huge resolution so that they would stand up to any print medium. They use a colour palette that is common across all the images – our brand colours which help reinforce that these images are from *Wheelman*. These colours were then carried through to the marketing campaign and used in the website, packaging and point of sale graphics.



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Peter Thompson (**Fig.17**) - Marketing art

Peter Thompson (**Fig.16 – 17**) – These are promotional images for *Wheelman*, all using a particular colour scheme so they had a coherent look and feel. This type of work is very detailed and meticulous, and went through numerous tweaks and changes. Not only did they go through the approval process internally to Midway, they also had to be approved by Vin Diesel himself.

Wheelman - Midway Studios

For more information please visit:

http://www.midway.com

http://www.wheelmangame.com/

Or contact:

pthompson@midway.com


This month we feature:
Dmitry Grebenkov
Geoffrey Cramm
Tymoteusz Chliszcz
Roy Stein
Sergey Musin
İlker Serdar Yildiz
Ioan Dumitrescu aka Jonone
Alex Heath
Anthony James Foti
George Patsouras
THE GALLERY

Blade of Fire

George Patsouras
http://cgaddict.blogspot.com/
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Venus: Theft of the Life

Sergey Musin
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Gross Worm

Alex Heath

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30 Minutes

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It was a fierce battle

Geoffrey Cramm

http://www.geoffreycramm.nl

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Stranded

Ioan Dumitrescu aka Jonone
jononespo@yahoo.com

Self-Portrait

Tymoteusz Chliszcz
http://www.chliszcz.com
chliszcztymoteusz@poczta.onet.pl



Speed Painting

digital painting tutorial series volume 2



Chapter 01: Alien Hot Air balloons
Chapter 02: Steam Powered Mechanical Destroyer
Chapter 03: The Slave Caravan crossed the Desert
Chapter 04: The Beast was poised ready to strike!
Chapter 05: Man-Eating Plants
Chapter 06: The City Centre looked like a Jewel amongst the surroundings
Chapter 07: It was a long way up but they had no choice but to continue climbing
Chapter 08: Once a Thriving City now deserted and taken over by Vegetation
Chapter 09: Robot Scrap Yard

Introduction

Our brand new 91-page eBook is a collection of "Speed Painting" tutorials which have been created by some of the top digital painters around today. The idea behind this tutorial series was for the artist to interpret a one-line descriptive brief (provided by us!), create a speed painting from it and then produce a tutorial showing and explaining each stage of production of the artwork. This downloadable PDF eBook can be followed in most 2D software packages that support paintbrushes and layers.

The featured artists are:

Nathaniel West
Daniel Ljunggren
Emrah Elmasli
Mike Corriero
Rich Tilbury
Robin Olausson
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2DA challenge

2DArtist Magazine introduces the new 'Challenge' Section of the mag. Every month we will run the Challenges, available for anyone to enter, for prizes and goodies from www.3dtotal.com shop and to also get featured in this very magazine! The 2D Challenge runs in the conceptart.org forums. Here we will display the winners from the previous months challenges and the 'Making Of's from the month before that.



Troll

Stylised Challenge

Stylised Challenge Troll

The Challenge

Welcome to the Super Stylised Monthly Challenge. Each month we will select a theme and post some images in the **Forum Thread** for reference. All you have to do is to create a 2D image in line with this theme in a stylised / abstract / cartoon style, whilst keeping your image instantly recognisable. We wanted to publish some content in 2DArtist Magazine on how to create stylised images, such as you see in the many feature films and cartoon galleries.

10th



Peter Temesi - Hopsy
hopsy@t-online.hu
http://www.temesi.hu

9th



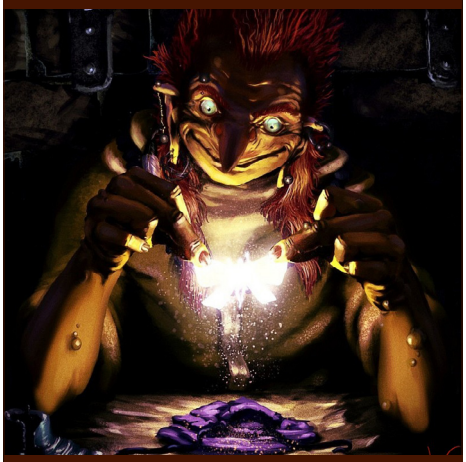
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Liran Szeiman - Liranz
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6th



Joewie Aderes - Loztvampir3
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6th



Dave Neale - Daveneale
davejneale@hotmail.com
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We thought this regular competition might bring in just the images / Making Of's that we need, whilst giving away great prizes and exposure. This month's theme was **"Troll"**. Here you can see the top placed entries, as voted for by the public.

What are we looking for?

Funny and humorous entries which break the theme down to its most recognisable components; emphasise these in whichever ways you think best, and render your stylised / abstract / cartoon masterpiece. The rules are

5th



Jan Pedroietta - Jpedro
jpedro@jpedro.com
http://jpedro.cgsociety.org/gallery/

4th



Tibi Tircomnicu - Timmy the Turtle
tb_fishbrain@yahoo.com
http://www.tibiart.blog.com

3rd



Tom van Wanrooy - Tommoy
info@thecartoonfactory.nl
http://www.thecartoonfactory.nl

pretty laid back: please submit 1 x 3D render (minor post work is OK); its up to you if you want to have a background; include some graphical elements or text on your image. Renders of the 800 pixel dimension sound about right, but the winners will be featured in 2DArtist Magazine, so if you can create some higher res images too then all the better!

There will be one competition per month, with the deadline being the end of the month (GMT). For a valid entry, just make sure your final image is posted in the main competition thread before the deadline. We require the top three winners to submit "Making Of" overview articles that will be shown on either 3DTotal or in 2DArtist Magazine. These need to show the stages of your creation - different elements and some brief explanation text - of why, and how, you did what you did. We will format this into some nice-looking pages to give you some great exposure, and us some quality content. Each competition will have one main thread which starts with the brief at the top. All entrants should post all WIP's, give feedback and generally laugh at the crazy ideas that are emerging each month...

2nd



Patri Balanovsky - Chuck,mate
pat2003b@yahoo.com
http://www.chuckmate.blogspot.com

Challenge Thread

The entire **Troll** competition can be viewed **Here**
The current challenge at the voting stage is: **Bigfoot (Sasquatch)**
The current challenge taking place is: **Cyclops**

To join the next challenge, or to view previous, and / or current entries, please visit: **www.conceptart.org**
Or contact: **Lynette@zoopublishing.com**

1st Place:
Rolox - Rolando Mallada

rolocomic@yahoo.com.ar

http://rolando-mallada.blogspot.com/



Making Of's

Here are the "Making Of's" from last month's top three winning entries...

3rd Urih_pta2

Software Used: Photoshop

Step 1

This illustration was created digitally. I started with a sketch, drawing lines with a graphics tablet and playing with layers and transparencies until a possible idea came to my mind (**Fig.01**); however the final result was changed quite a bit.

I like to play with proportions and one of my favourite body frames is that of the gorilla – it was this same body frame that I decided to apply to my butcher. Generally speaking, a butcher has to carry a lot of weight in his work, so he has strong arms and shoulders. I didn't want my butcher to be a bodybuilder though, so I gave him a weighty belly too.

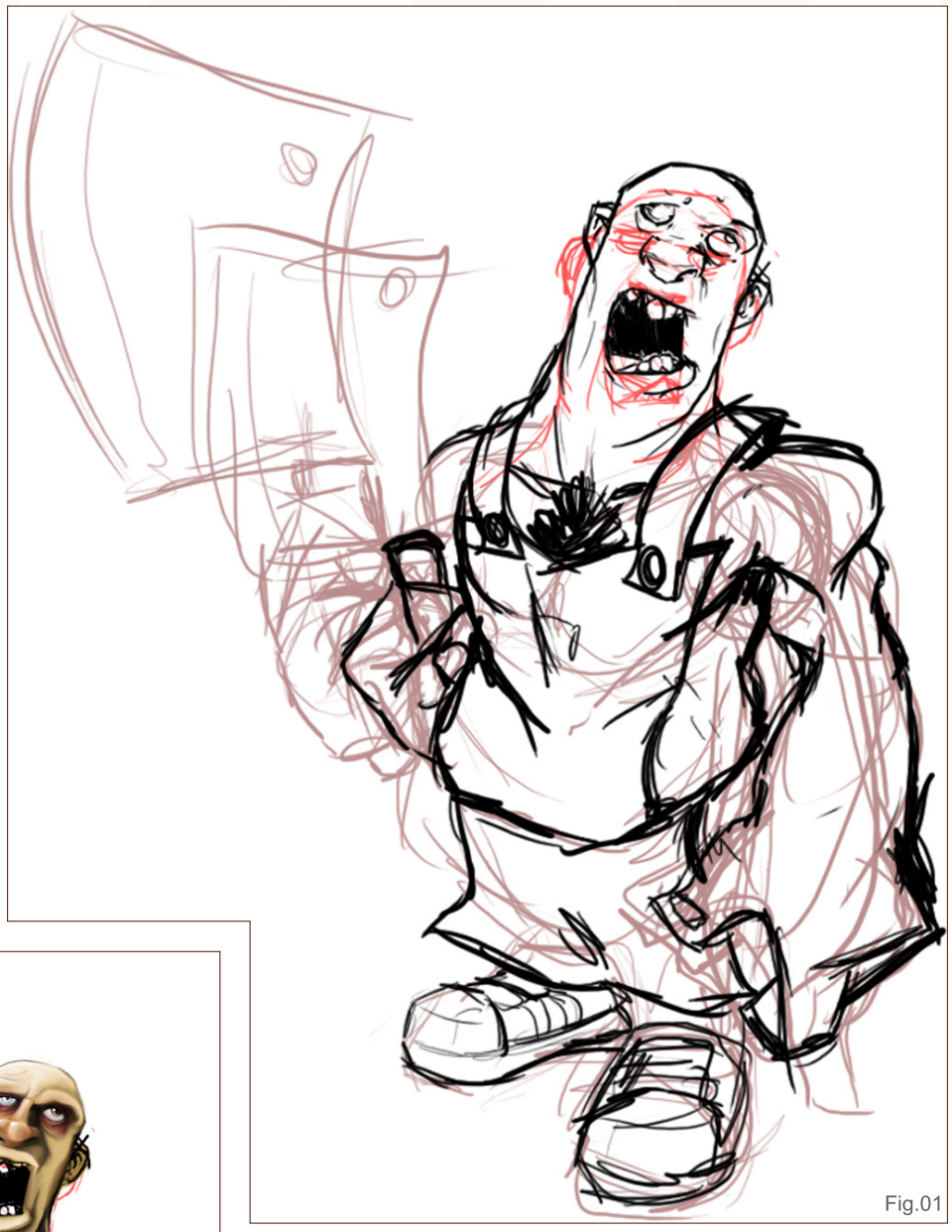


Fig.01

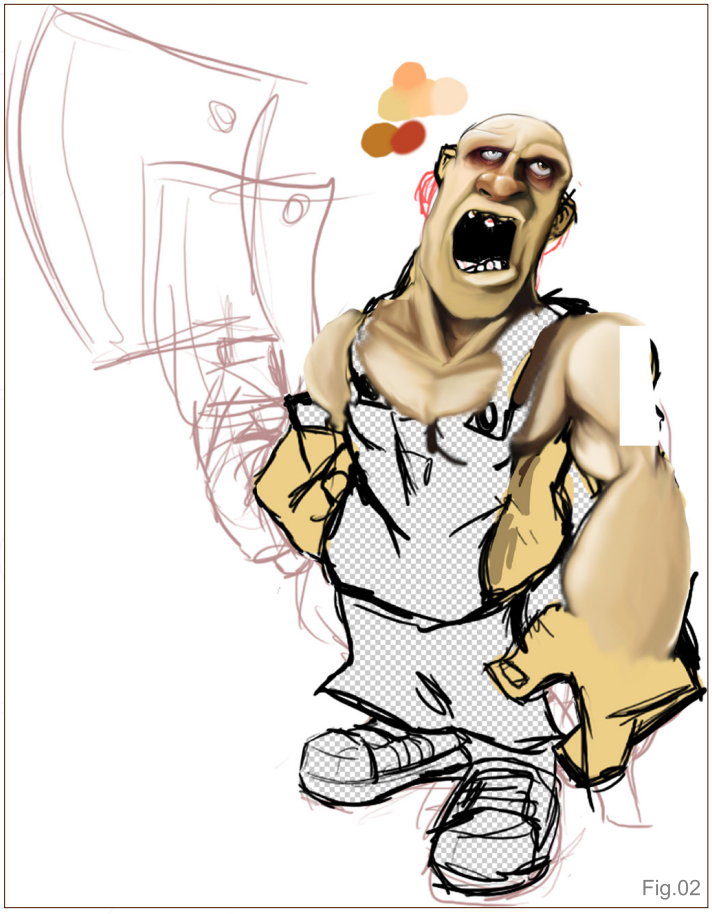


Fig.02

Step 2

I have the habit (which I picked up from painting graffiti on the streets) of leaving some unfinished areas, against other that are totally coloured. For example, as you can see in **Fig.02**, the face is more advanced than the rest.

I wanted to give him a psychopathic tendency, especially in the face, and so I used Leather Face (*The Texas Chain Saw Massacre*), Sloth (*The Goonies*), Kane (*WWE*) as points of reference, as well as your typical country bumpkin/yokel types. I wanted to transmit bad vibrations, which is why the mouth was important to achieve this feeling. In order to make the butcher look even more horrible, I gave him an absent gaze and I painted in a blind eye. The skin had to be greasy and yellow with saliva and blood stains … I thought about tattoos, but he's not the type of person who has tattoos.

Step 3

The face was beginning to take on its final form at this stage (**Fig.03**). I decided to mark the jaw and his features to make him look strong. The body was also given more colour and volume here. When I draw/paint, I generally brush strokes of colour and light to give more volume to a drawing, and then, if necessary, I use the Smudge tool to blend. I like to use a very soft brush and low pressure when I paint. Thanks to the Smudge tool in Photoshop, I finished the apron pretty quickly.


Fig.03


Fig.04

Step 4

As I mentioned before, I felt the mouth had to have a lot of personality. When I finished the colour study I gave extra detail to the face with the dark rings under the eyes, saliva dripping from his mouth, bad teeth, skin blemishes and greasy hair, using clean edges with softened colour blends (**Fig.04**).

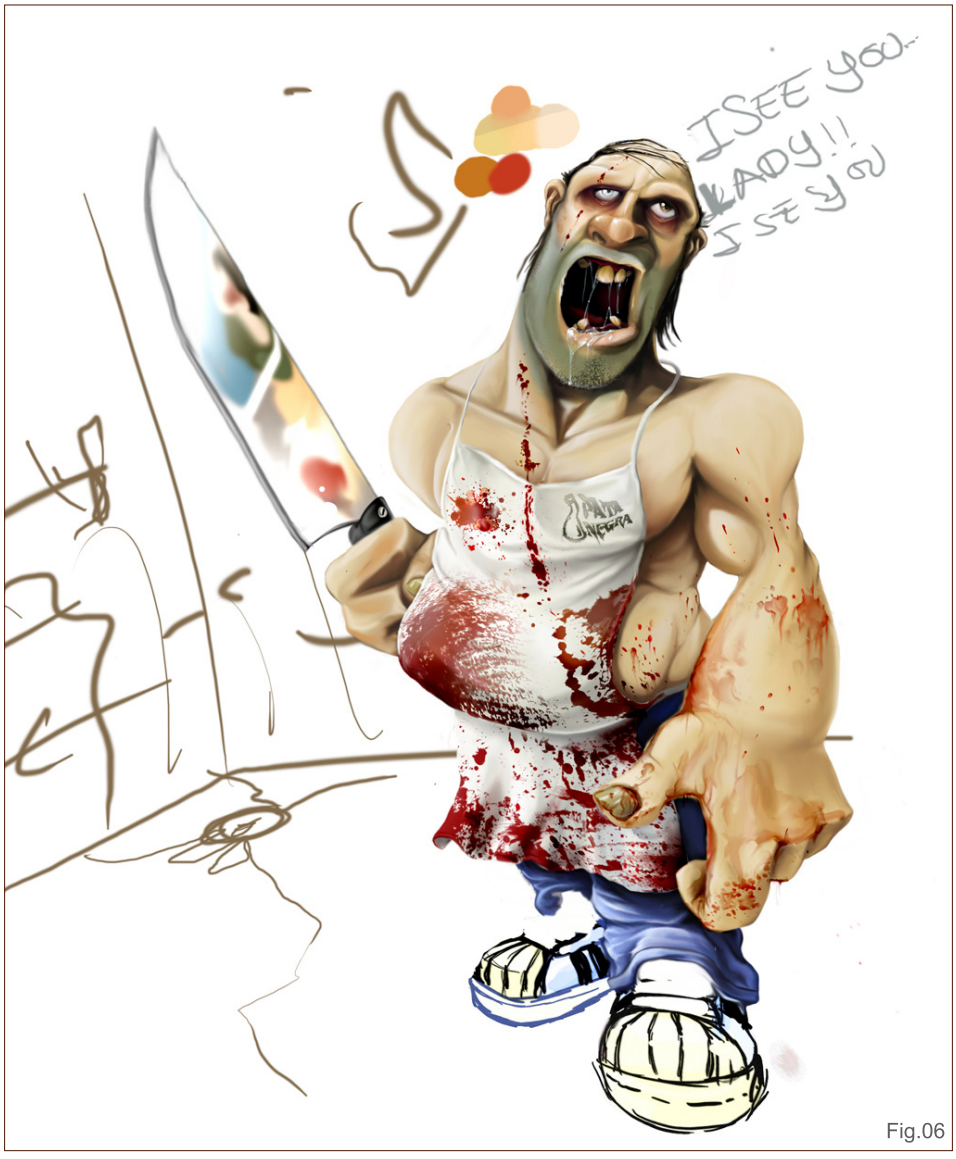


Fig.06



Step 5

Once the body had been coloured, and after saturating the colours, I created a doctoral thesis on blood with the help of the Internet and

a video game where you have to kill zombies. I was trying to give different textures to the blood, because the blood on the cloth was supposed to be darker and drier. The colour of the flesh had to be orange, and I mixed the dried blood with his sweat on his skin (**Fig.05**).

Step 6

After studying the proportions, I realised that his legs were too short and so I changed the legs at this stage, giving them an inclination (**Fig.06**).

As a tribute to my hobby, I drew shoes that are common in the world of graffiti. After changing the legs, I also noticed that the arms were not too good. I wanted to play with the reflection of the knife, but I decided to change it and use the idea that a friend of mine suggested to me.

Step 7

A power saw was the solution. This enabled me to play more with the blood and increase my tribute to Leather Face. I changed the colour again here – less yellow – and painted the occlusion of the skin (**Fig.07**).





Final

The final problem was the background. I decided not to put the butcher in any kind of specific scene because I prefer to give importance to the person and not to the situation or to the action, allowing the viewer to decide his location – in a slaughterhouse, an old house in Wall Street, a hostel ... Because everything was very bloody, I added a pool of blood to the floor and painted in his reflection as the finishing touch (**Fig.08**).

I must say that this is one of the illustrations that I've had more fun with, and I've learned quite a few different effects from it. Thanks to the entire team of 2DArtist magazine, to the ConceptArt.org forums, and of course to my people.

Oriol Muñoz Anguera

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Or contact them at:
urih.pta2@gmail.com

2nd Ruth2m

Hi everybody! I'm back with another "Making Of" and once again, I hope it helps somebody, somehow. Enjoy!

STEP 1

For this character I wanted to represent a surgeon as a butcher. My first idea was to show a very crazy and unbalanced surgeon who carries out real slaughters in the operating room. That's why in my first sketch we can see a surgeon wearing his clothes and mask, along with some of the equipment of a typical operating room, but also the knife that defines him as a butcher (**Fig.01**).

Further on you will see that my idea changed and I opted to show an immaculate and refined butcher, who looks like a surgeon (although I failed to provide him with a crazy or evil face) ... which was the opposite of the original idea. I decided to change this because I found that I was focusing on the surgeon too much and was losing sight of the original theme: the butcher.

STEP 2

Before getting down to drawing the final lines, I wanted to do a study of light. I hadn't done it at the initial sketch stage, but I do think it's very good to consider it at that early stage of the picture because it helps to make the focal point, shadows and general atmosphere of your piece much clearer.



Fig.01



Fig.02

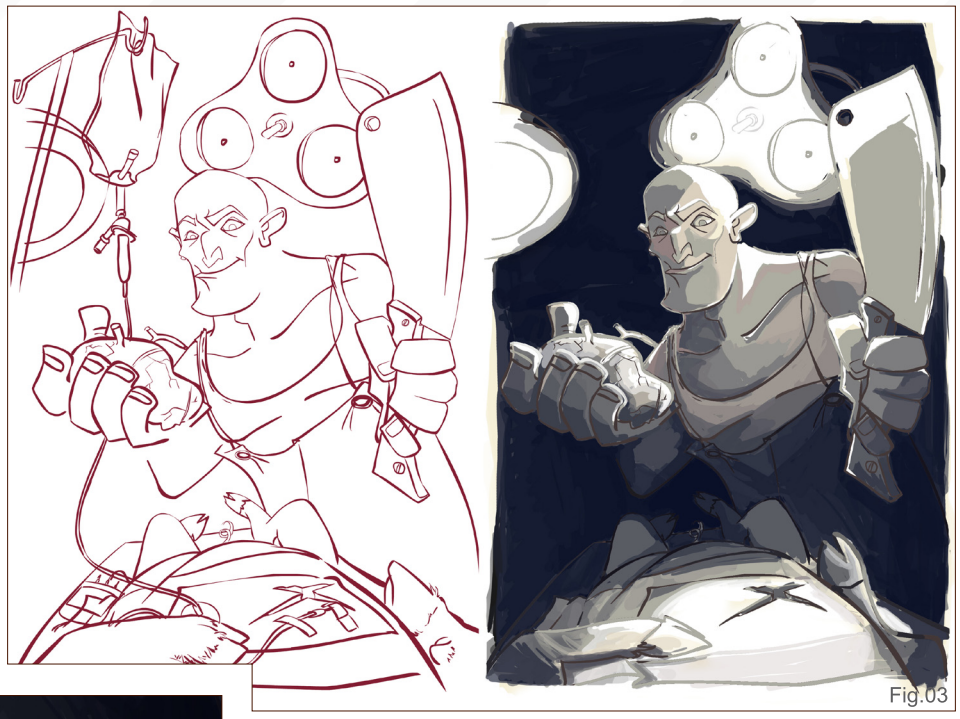
At this point I was certain that I wanted to focus the viewer's attention on the butcher's hands (which hold the heart and the knife), on his face and on the victim's wound. That's why I outlined the area with a circle in the sketch, to emphasise which area was going to be better lit up and which one would be in shade (**Fig.02**).

STEP 3

After I'd made all these decisions, I cleaned the line in Flash. Looking back I think I lost some of the dynamism of the initial sketch at this point; the action of taking out the heart from the wound stood out much more clearly in the original

sketch, and the position of the butcher was more mocking - maybe I went too fast with this illustration.

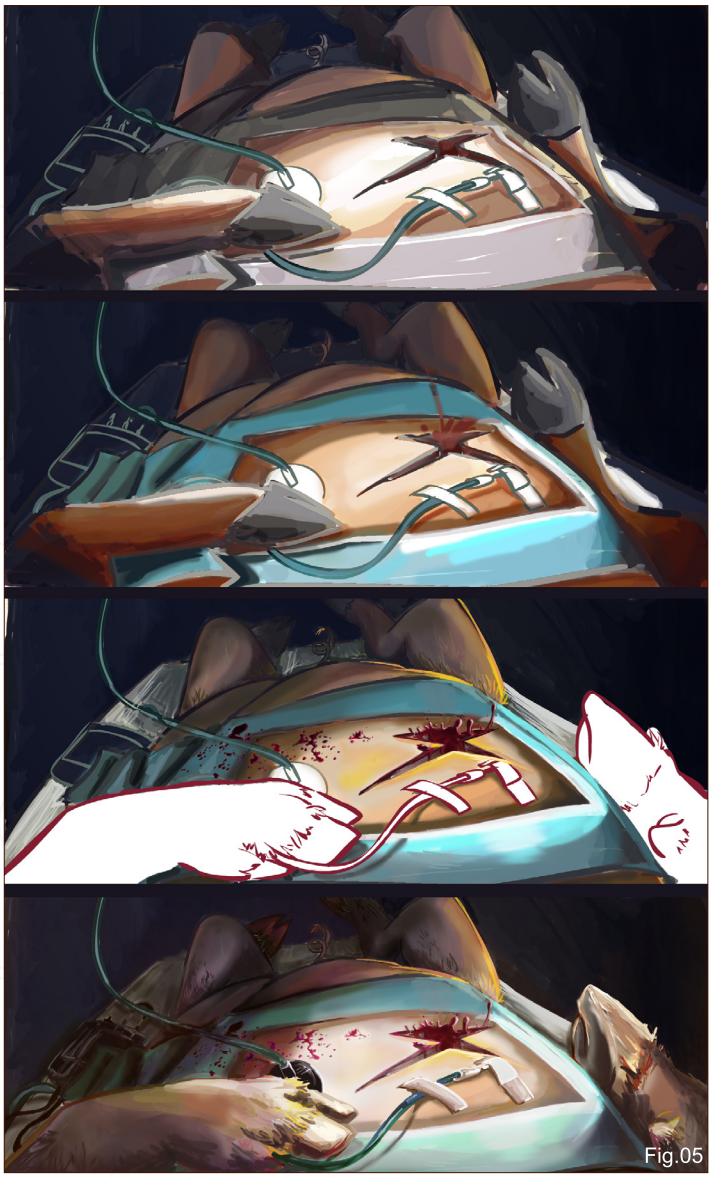
In this step I added an apron on the butcher and put a pig on the operating table. I also carried out another light study, very similar to the original, but this time focusing more on the volumes of the character. I don't usually colour such dark illustrations, but I felt like trying to make a drawing where the predominant colour was black, so in this way I could give it a more macabre tone (**Fig.03**).


Fig.03

STEP 4

It was time to give some colour to the picture. I chose de-saturated darkish colours, between blue and green, so that the boundary between light and shadow became much harder and more aggressive (**Fig.04**).


Fig.04


Fig.05

STEP 5

In the area of direct light (the pig lying on the operating table) I used a very bright type of colour, as I had studied the shadows and lights provided by this type of operating room lamps, and after seeing archive pictures, I realised that the light cast by these lamps brings about very saturated, harsh colours. The kind of tone that I used was very de-saturated and it turned out to be bright (**Fig.05**).

Again, I would like to thank those who voted for me, and also for the organisation, because this contest helps us to learn more and encourages us to practise, which is always good (**Fig.06**).

Ruth Martinez

For more work by this artist please visit:
http://ruth2m.com
Or contact them at:
ruth2m@gmail.com



Fig.06

1st 28thWing

Software Used: ArtRage 2

Concept

When reading the brief for November's challenge, two basic concepts came to mind. One had tonnes of blood and gore, trembling bunnies and chickens scared to death – a real horror scene that is. The other was a peaceful scene: the portrait of a butcher (a bit stereotypical) from the beginning of the 20th Century. The general works submitted for the challenge were based on bloody concepts (such as my bunny scene concept), so, to stand apart from the others, I finally decided to paint the butcher, calm and smiling. I already had a concept of the main shapes in mind: a smallish head, a strong body and coarse forearms, with a butcher's prop in his hand – all organised in a pyramid composition.

Sketching

The whole picture was digitally painted using ArtRage 2, from the initial drawing of the very first line through to the finishing brushstroke. For the sketch, I created a layer and started doodling with the Pencil tool to find the forms, proportions and the rough anatomy. On the background, I created vertical directions with salami, ham and sausages (**Fig.01**).



Fig.01

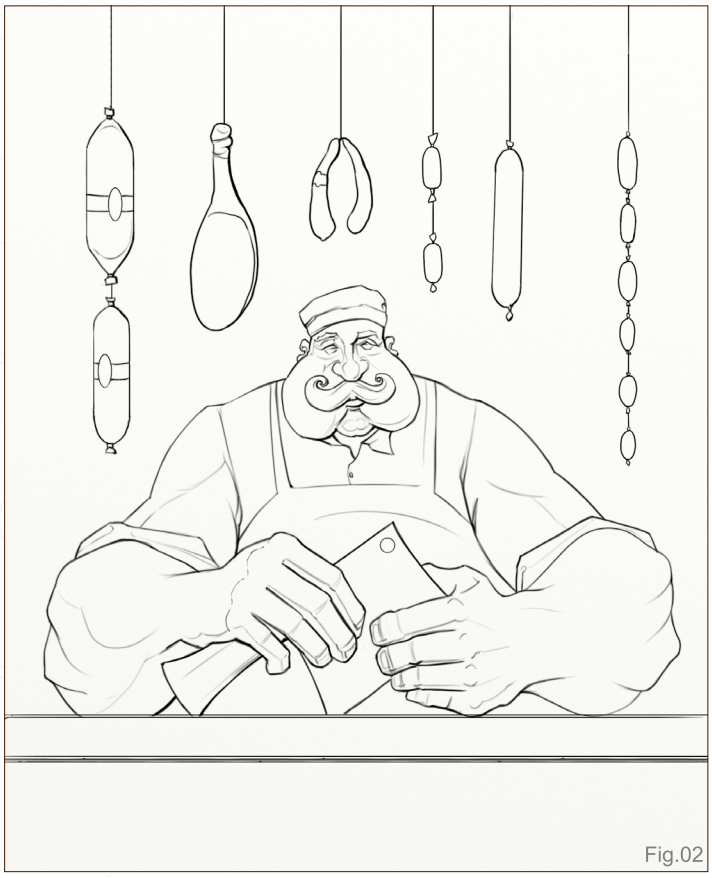


Fig.02

The next step was an outline exercise where I cleaned up the lines and refined the forms on a separate layer. For this, I used a small sized Chalk tool without paper texture effects (**Fig.02**).

Values

Following the sketch, I painted a mid-grey background on a new layer using a large Paint Roller with a basic paper texture. After that, I defined the light sources and started to "sculpt" the figure with light and dark tones (here I used a smaller size of the Paint Roller). I used the Palette Knife tool to blend tones, when needed. I continued to develop the painting: the background got darker tones and I shaped the products in the back with somewhat lighter tones as a background (**Fig.03**). When pleased with the results, I created a new layer for the colours.

Colouring

I switched the layer mode to Overlay and started to fill it with a large, reddish-brownish Paint Roller. I then continued by colouring separate parts of the figure – I used brownish/muddy colours for the arms and face, bluish for the chopper, and let these colours blend with the base reddish tone; sometimes I made use of the Palette Knife to help (**Fig.04**).


Fig.04

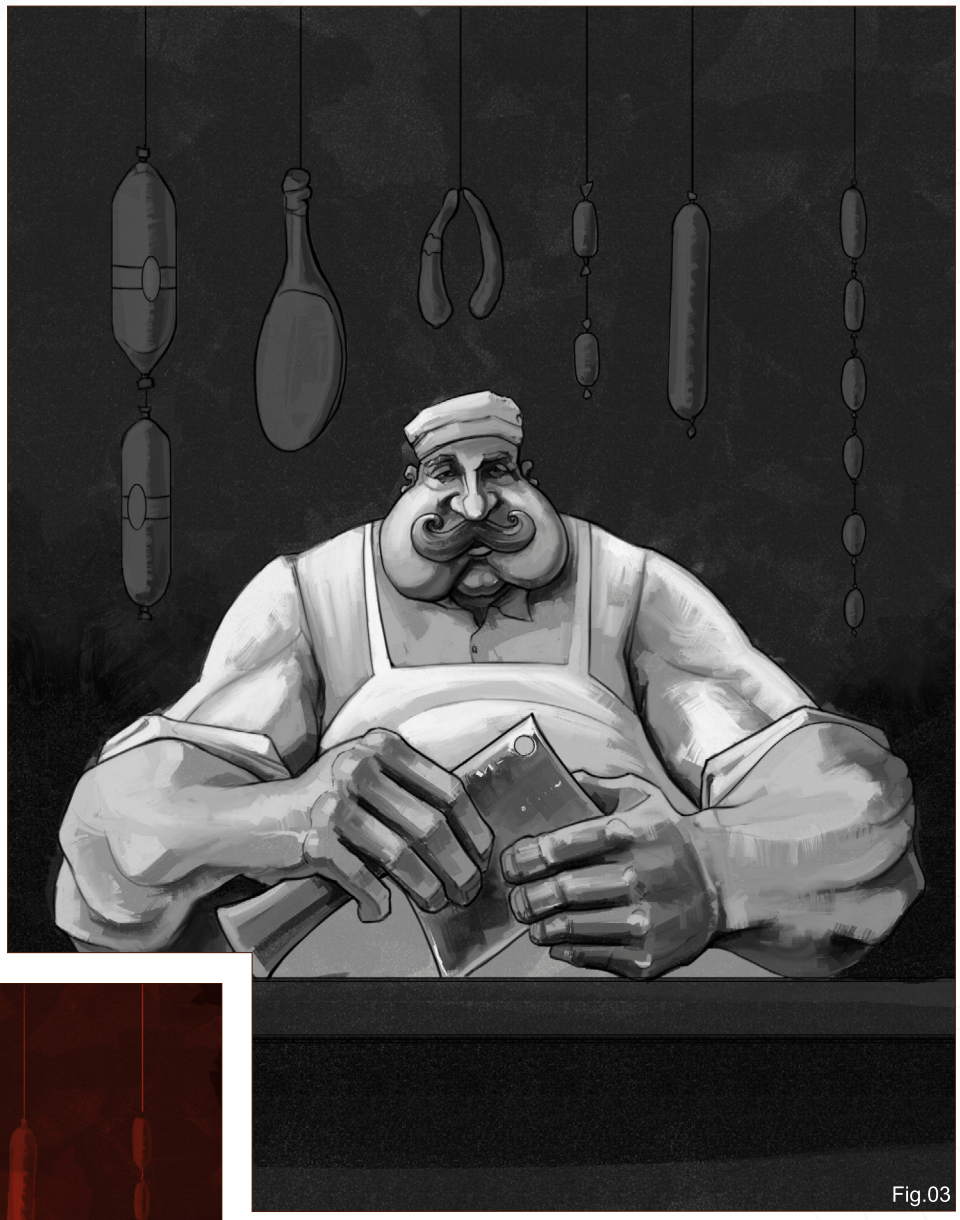

Fig.03


Fig.05

I then started to paint the details – this was the most exciting part of the work, with many interesting, colourful patches, and my task was to arrange them to arrive at the correct forms and surfaces. I worked on a new layer (without a layer effect), and refined the silhouette and the details (**Fig.05**).

There were many “happy accidents” along the way, so I often allowed the interesting forms and colours to lead my hand. All in all, it was a lot of fun, even if there are mistakes in the painting (the forearm anatomy, for instance).

János Kiss

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Or contact them at:
janos.kiss@28thwing.com



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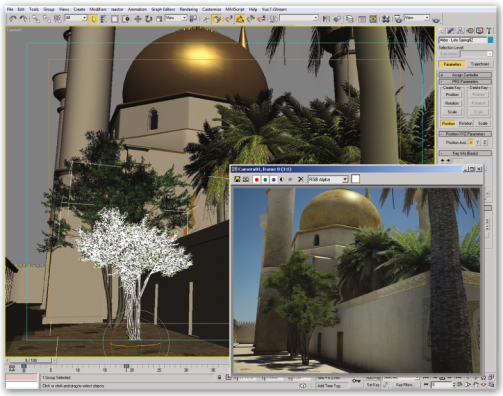
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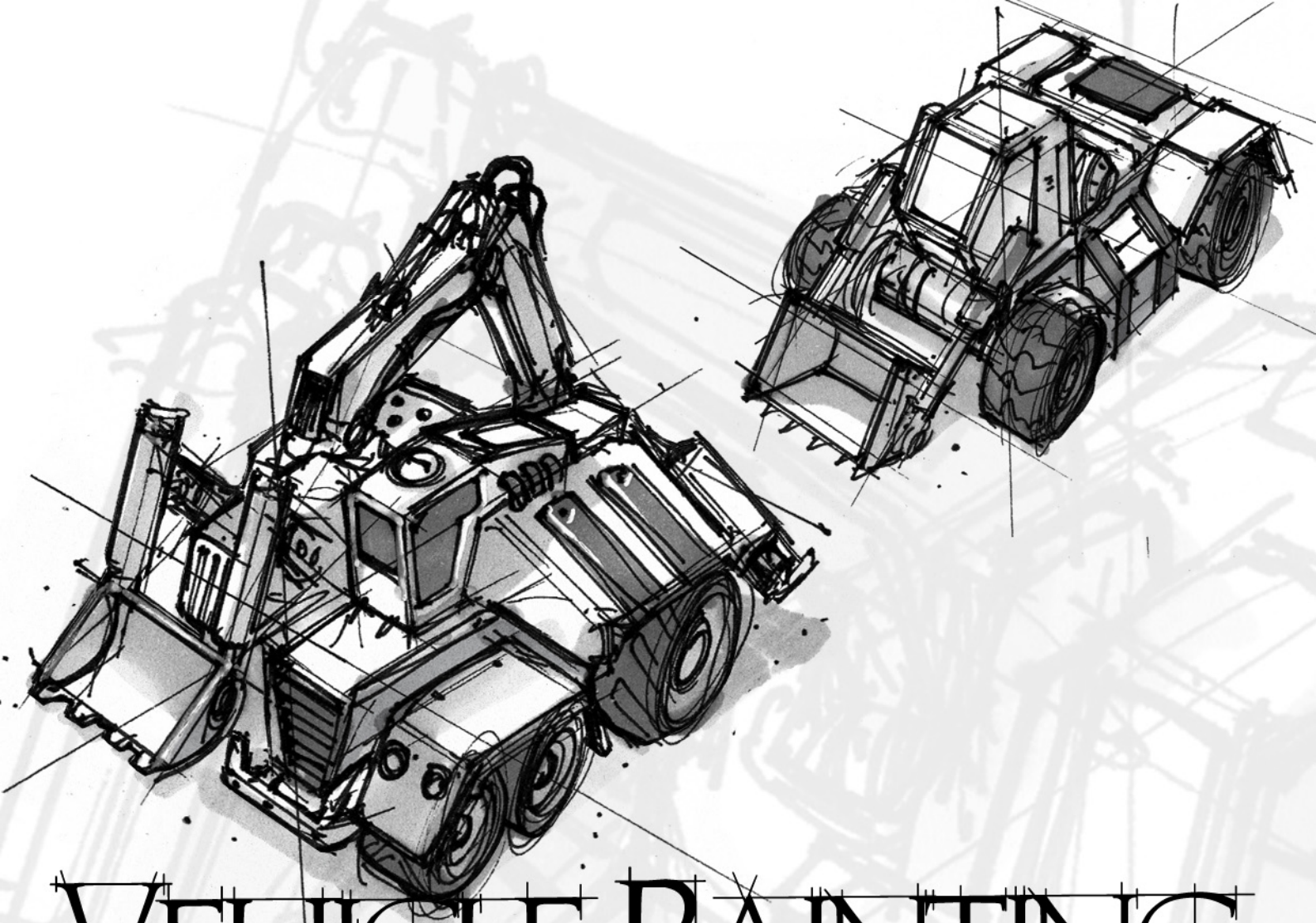


3ds Max mosque model, rendered with Vue environments using Mental Ray Sun & Sky.

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VEHICLE PAINTING

TUTORIAL SERIES

This series will take an in-depth look into the process of designing vehicles, beginning with the concept stage and following through to a final design. We will cover sketching approaches used to evolve and refine an initial idea, and show the techniques used to produce a number of drawings, exploring a variety of designs.

The tutorial will then move onto creating a finished design and placing the vehicle in a simple scene and addressing the issue of rendering the various materials that make up its construction. The importance of perspective will be explained before concluding with a chapter on adding design details and lighting effects.

PART 1 – **Issue 038** Feb 2009

PART 2 – **Issue 039** Mar 2009

PART 3 – **Issue 040** Apr 2009

PART 4 – **Issue 040** May 2009

PART 5 – **Issue 040** Jun 2009

VEHICLE PAINTING

Dwayne Vance

Created In: **Painter**, **Alchemy** and **Photoshop**

Introduction

My design brief for this project is to design a sleek race car, so I'm instantly thinking of long sleek shapes that are aerodynamic and fast looking. My next thought is when the car will be built – in the future or from the past? Since this is an open project I will probably let my shapes dictate whether it is set in the future or the past, and I will draw forms that represent both.

In this tutorial I'll give a few different approaches that I like to use to generate ideas quickly. I use three different programs to start my ideation: Alchemy, a freeware programme, Painter and Photoshop.

At this point I just let my mind wander and I'm trying to come up with unique shapes and patterns. I treat this phase as if looking at the clouds in the sky and coming up with shapes and interesting forms; trying to be unique but still keeping a really cool look.

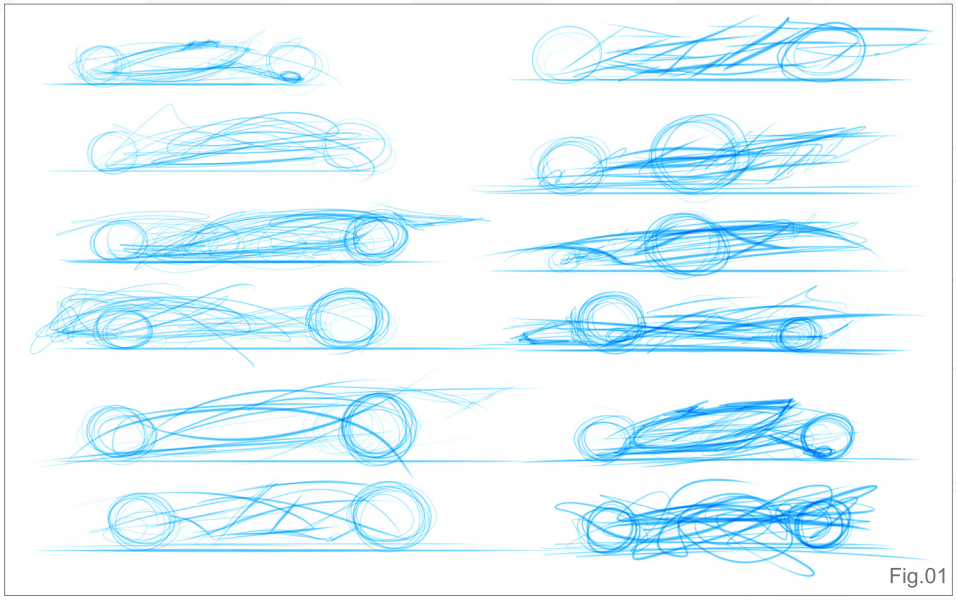


Fig.01

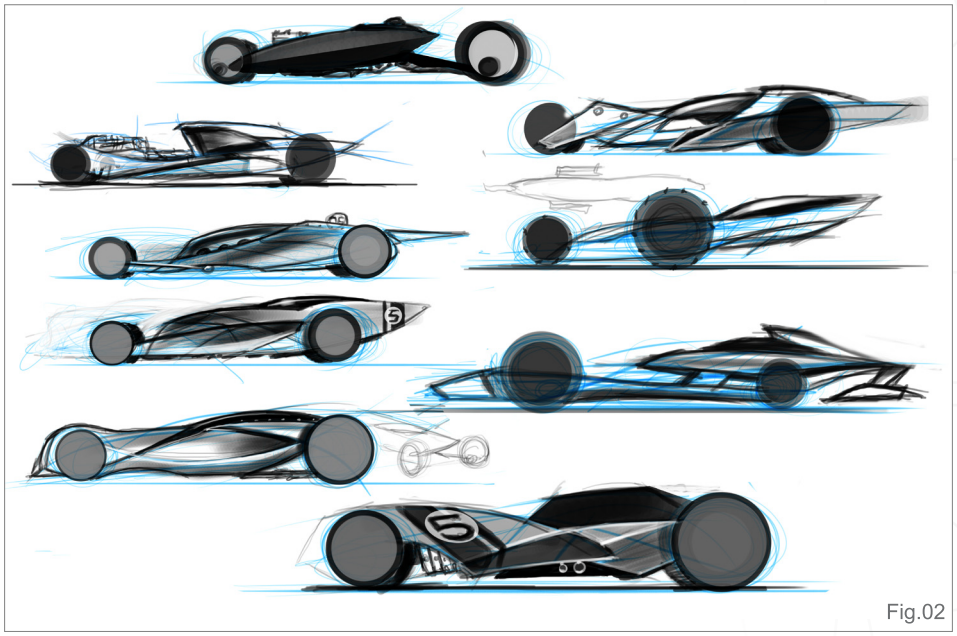


Fig.02

Alchemy Sketches

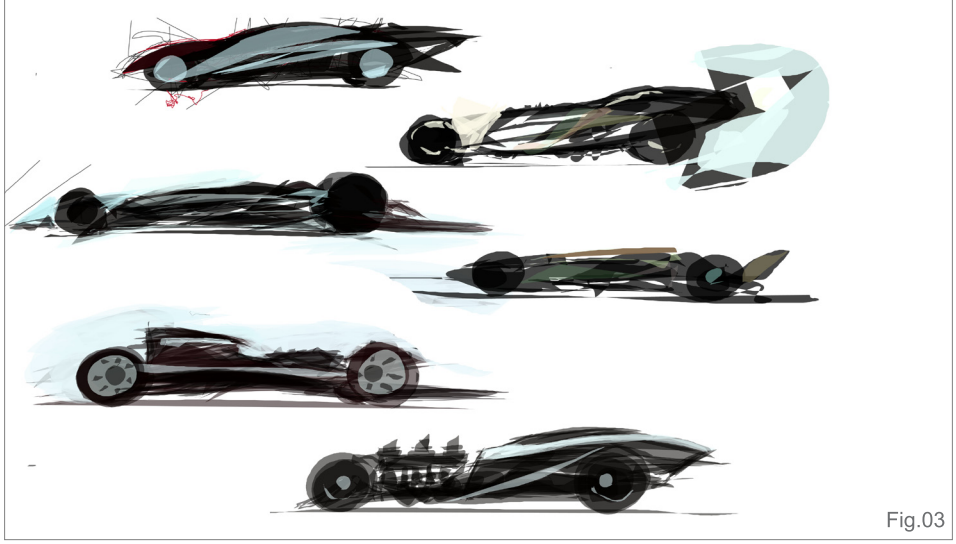


Fig.03

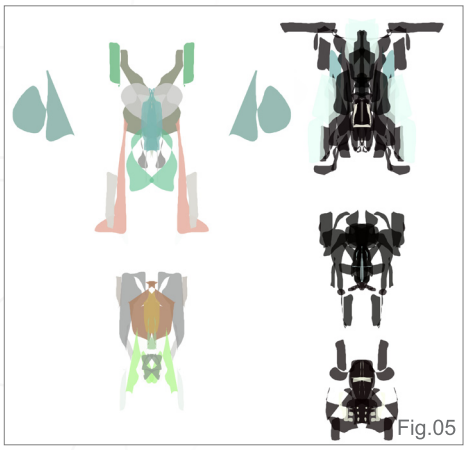
At this stage, don't worry about being perfect, just draw and let your hand flow. It really can be a lot of fun and takes the pressure off you to create something perfect at first.

I start with **Painter** and make lots of scribbled drawings; I'm not trying to be precise with these sketches, just letting my hand flow. The only thing I think about is that it needs to look fast, so my lines are long and aggressive. I will refine them as I go along. As you can see (**Fig.01**), I have several rough squiggles. I was keeping my lines quick and loose, trying not to draw what I already know; trying to come up with new lines and unexpected shapes.

I now start to go over my Painter sketches and fill them in a little, trying to keep the squiggles as my guidelines to create interesting shapes (**Fig.02**).

Now I try another program called **Alchemy**, where I draw random shapes and again try to keep it loose and see what kinds of combinations I can come up with. In Alchemy there are lots of settings you can choose from. There is no 'undo' in this programme though, which can actually really help in your process of creation as it forces you to work in an unfamiliar way (**Fig.03 – 04**).

I feel at this stage like I'm drawing too many familiar car shapes from the side view, so I'm going to work on top views (**Fig.05**). There is a really cool mirror tool in Alchemy that creates symmetry – it makes some really cool 'happy accidents'.


Fig.05

Alchemy Sketches

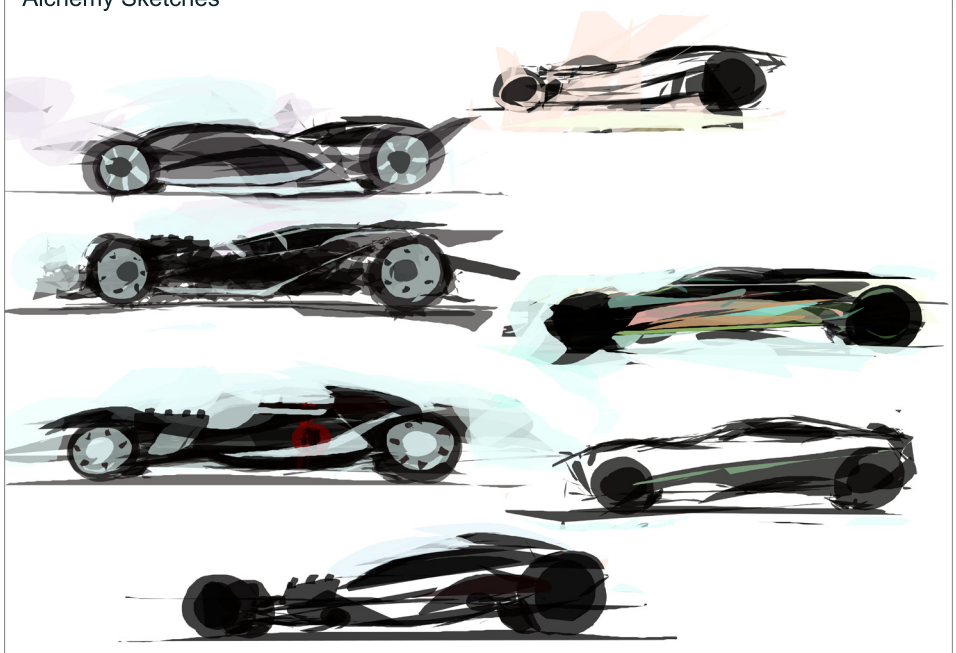
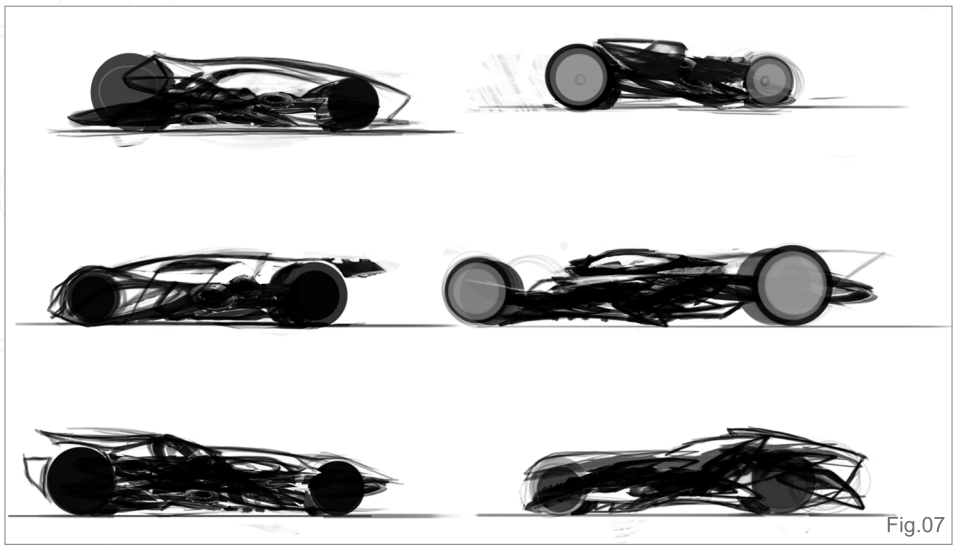
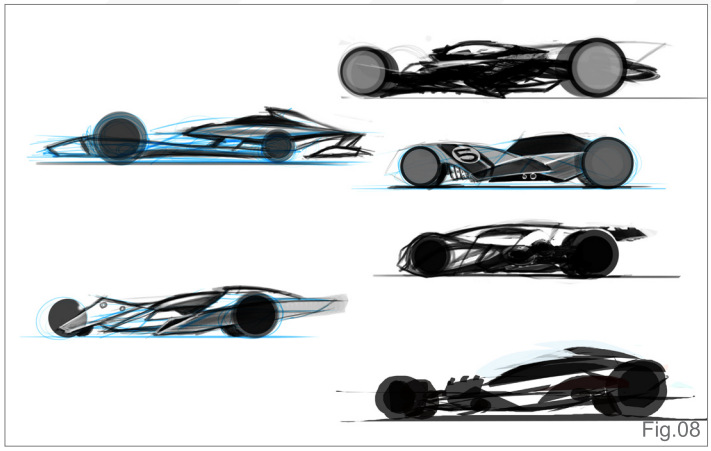
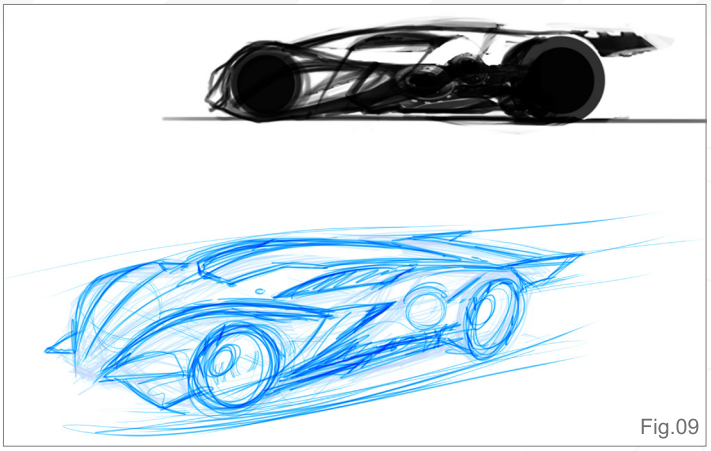

Fig.04


Fig.06


Fig.07

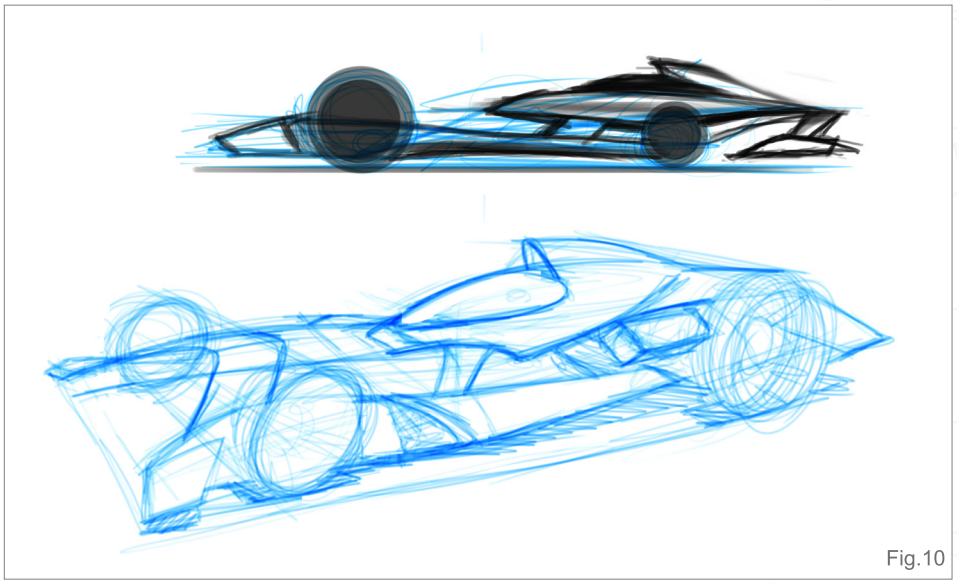
I'm now trying one more method for creating random shapes, and I also create some custom brushes in **Photoshop.** This method I can credit to the guys at **Steambot Studios** for, and it works great! So I create my own custom brushes in Photoshop and make them really aggressive looking to go with the design brief (**Fig.06**). I then start laying down random brushstrokes, creating shapes with them (**Fig.07**). The cool thing about these kinds of brushes is that they give you lots of exposed mechanical looking details. Then, after creating your shapes, you can pull them, stretch them and flip them until you get something you like.


Fig.08


Fig.09

Now I go through and start selecting a few that I really think are interesting and have some potential to make a cool sleek race car (**Fig.08**). As you can see, I have lots of different looks here, but they all have a fast appearance to them. Now I will take these cars and do some rough thumbnails in three-quarter view.

In these sketches I take a side view and a top view and combine them (**Fig.09 – 13**). This helps me to start defining the car in three-quarter view. I still keep my three-quarter loose and I don't define anything yet; I'm still exploring what might give me a really unique shape. Most of these cars have come out futuristic, which is fine. Some of them have a hot rod style, but others look like flying ships with wheels. So I feel I have several good ones to choose from and I can still take each sketch and make them look different.


Fig.10

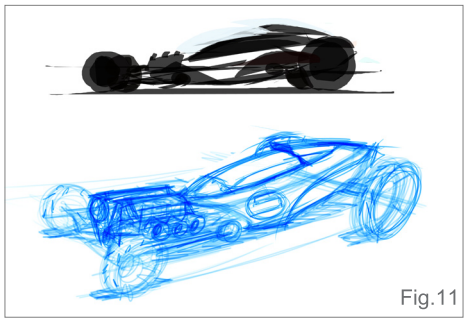
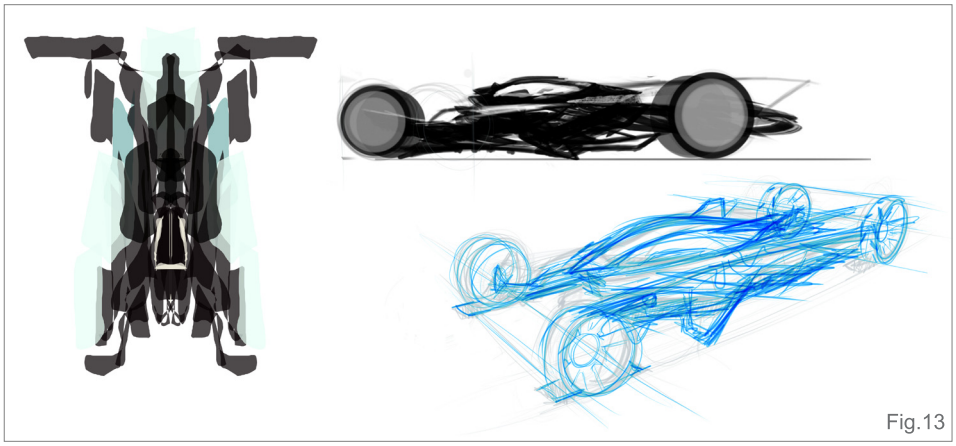

Fig.11


Fig.12


Fig.13

I hope you've enjoyed the first part of the tutorial and are looking forward to more refined designs in the next issue. Please do check out my website for more of my work in the meantime; you may also be interested in my latest book which contains mine and 12 other Hot Rod artists' works: **http://hotrodartbook.com/**. See you next month!

Dwayne Vance

For more from this artist visit
http://www.futureelements.net
or contact
vancedwa@sbcglobal.net

THAM HOI MUN

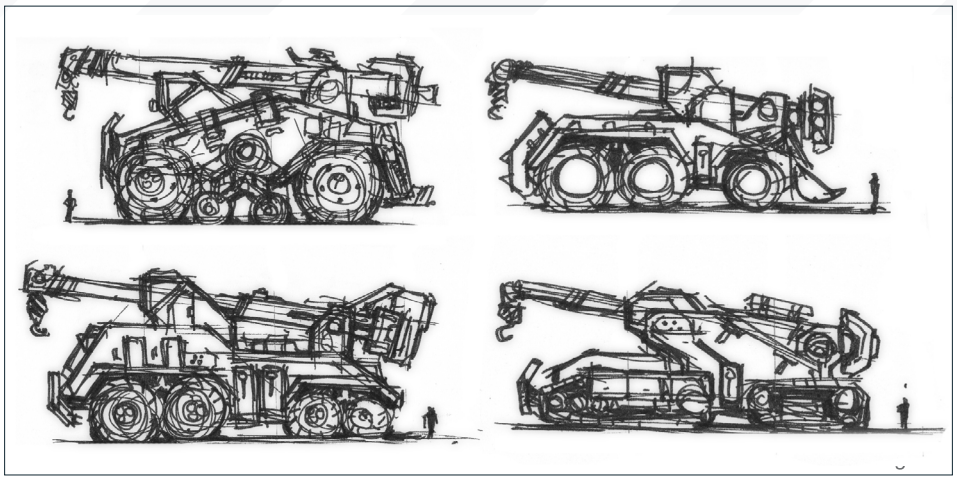
Created Using: Artline 200 0.4 fine point pen (similar to a Super Fine Sharpie) and Prismacolor medium cool grey 30 & 50% markers

Construction Vehicle – Early Concepts & Ideations

In this tutorial we're going to be designing a futuristic construction vehicle. Since we're going to be designing it for entertainment purposes, we have to be constantly aware of how people are reacting to our designs. Whether the audience finds it nice or ugly, cool or not-so-cool, every design decision made should always support the context, story or purpose.

When designing vehicles, the second most important thing, apart from cool visuals, is functionality. All good designs are followed by practical and believable functions. Most of the time concept art is meant to provide a better understanding for the next person down the pipeline, so it's important not to create any sort of confusion in your designs.

I start off by creating a huge set of thumbnails (**Fig.01a – c**), and then make some rather small rough concepts, experimenting with shapes and silhouettes. Depending on your personal preferences, you could just start by creating different silhouettes before getting into too much detail or form, but for me, depending on the



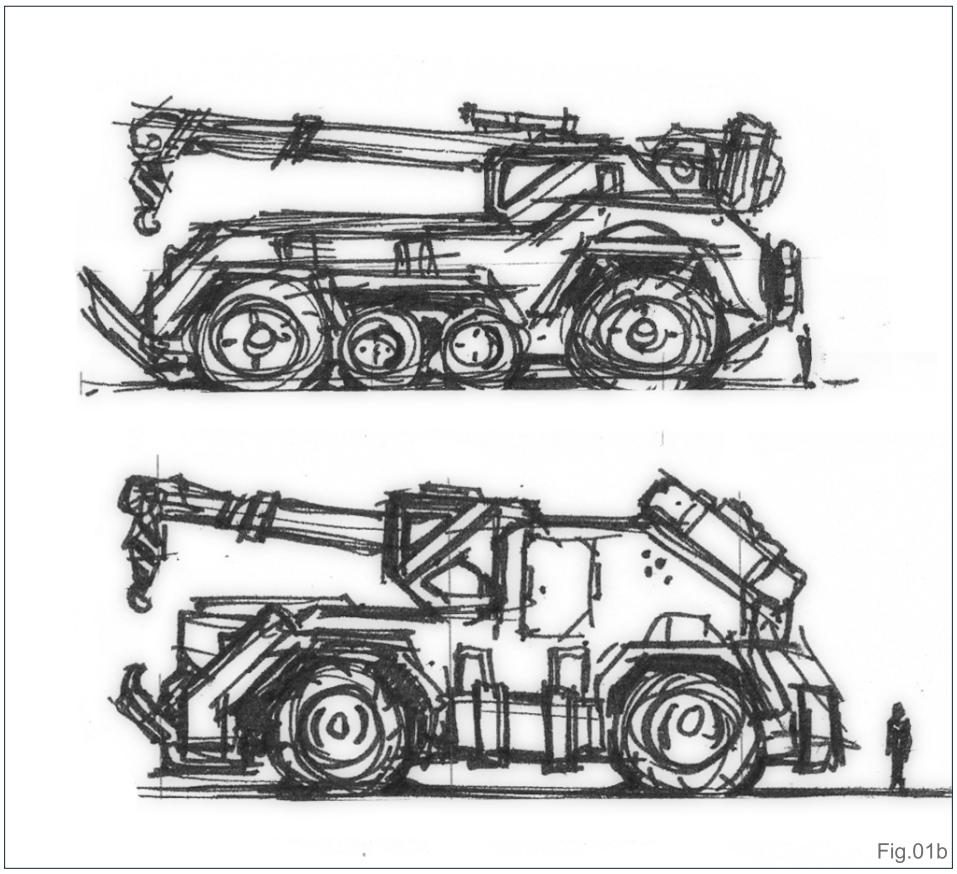


Fig.01b

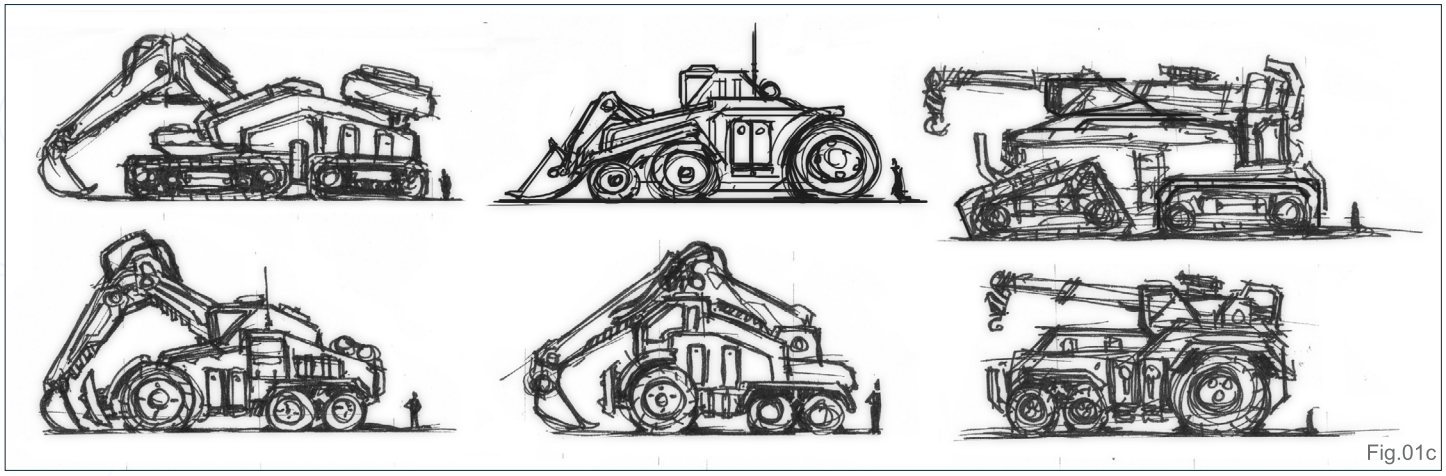
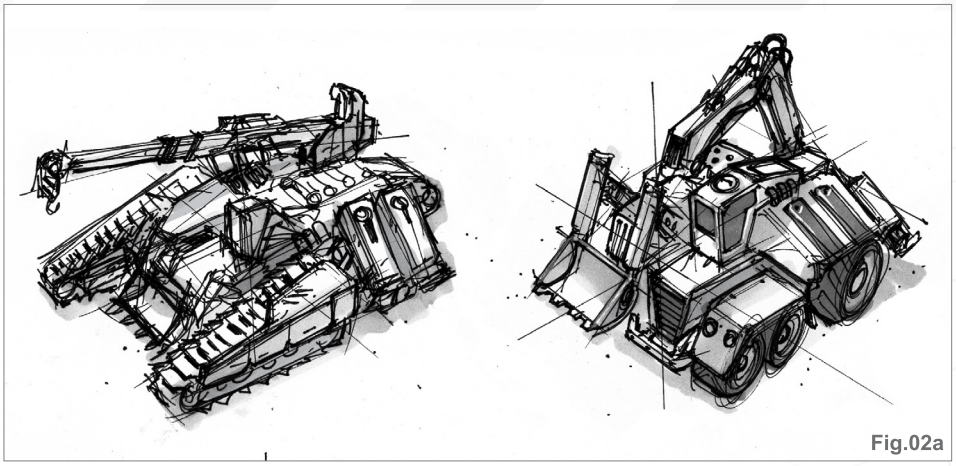


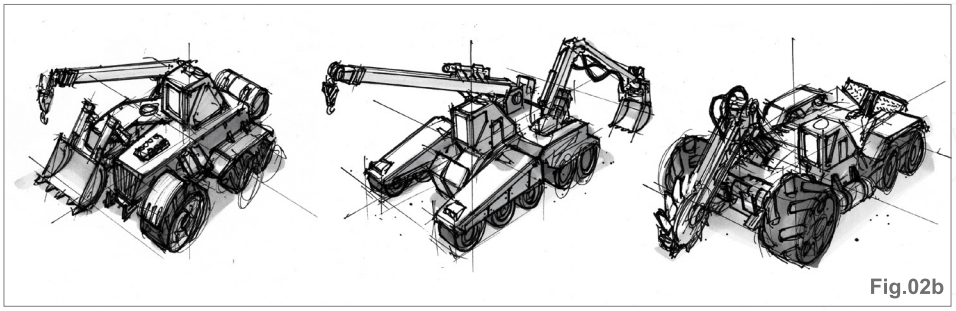
Fig.01c

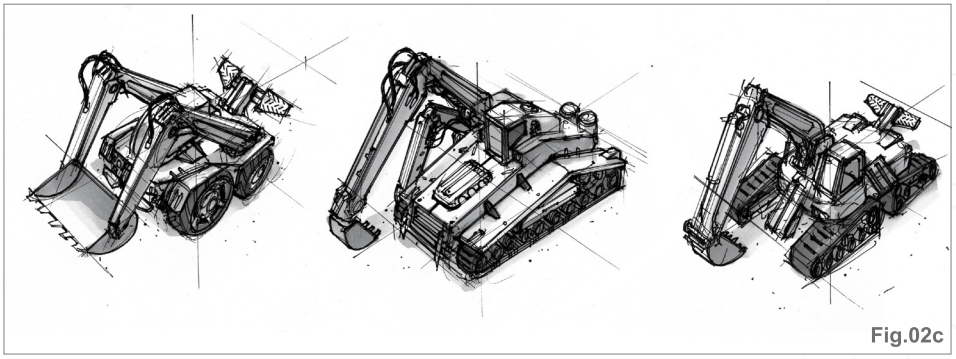
length of a project, I work differently. In this case I draw them rather detailed and small so that I can get more stuff figured out at once. Again, it depends on what works best for an artist, and it should not be something that is either right or wrong.

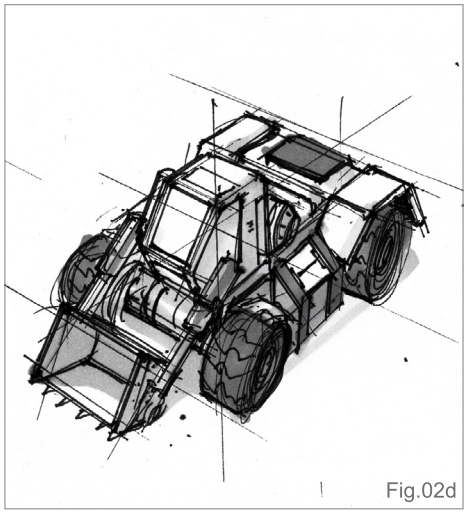
I spend about 10-15 minutes on each thumbnail. Try not to worry about your pace at the beginning if you're new to all this, just try to work out lots of good designs at this stage, because your pace and speed will catch up eventually once you've done this for quite some time. Practice, practice, practice, because there are no shortcuts!

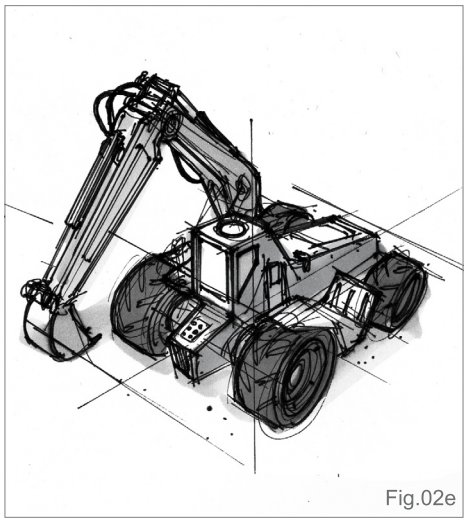
When designing, I usually give myself a set of guidelines to work with (just to keep in mind). For example, in this case, I want to make the design cool, tough, balanced, practical, logical and heavy. With these key points, I'm able to flesh out all the thumbnails. But of course, before this I would go through a bunch of references. It's very important to know how things work since there is a lot of machinery involved.


Fig.02a


Fig.02b


Fig.02c


Fig.02d


Fig.02e

As you can see, I'm working on some of the vehicles with wheels and others with tank tracks; some designs are excavators and some are crane-like – some are all in one! I'm still keeping my options open in terms of shape and size. When designing these thumbs I start off by laying down a 2-point perspective guide to help me out, and then I start sketching with a felt-tip pen (**Fig.02a – e**).

Start from the biggest shape to the smallest, general to specific, and you'll be able to control the overall volume much better.

Lastly, put all of your thumbnails together and evaluate your designs. Refer back to the guidelines you set yourself earlier and see which fit the best. Slash out the ones that aren't working, even if they look good. Again, if there's a story for you to refer to then it should be the one that fits and supports the story.

THAM HOI MUN

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ZOO PUBLISHING





SPEED PAINTING

Welcome to the Speed Painting section of the magazine. This month we've asked two artists to produce a speed painting based on a simple, one-line brief. Here we feature the final paintings and the overview of the creation processes.

This month our talented artists, Justin Albers and Richard Tilbury, tackle the topic:

The size of the task ahead was extremely daunting

RICHARD TILBURY

Software Used: Photoshop

The first stage was to try and decide exactly what I was going to represent in this image, as the title did not suggest anything to me immediately. I have recently finished a painting depicting a frozen wilderness and it is perhaps for this reason that the setting I ended up choosing materialised in my mind. I wanted to show a lonely explorer who has unwittingly set up camp somewhere that has suddenly broken up into an ice flow overnight. He is now left stranded with no obvious means of traversing the sections of ice and getting back to the main landmass.

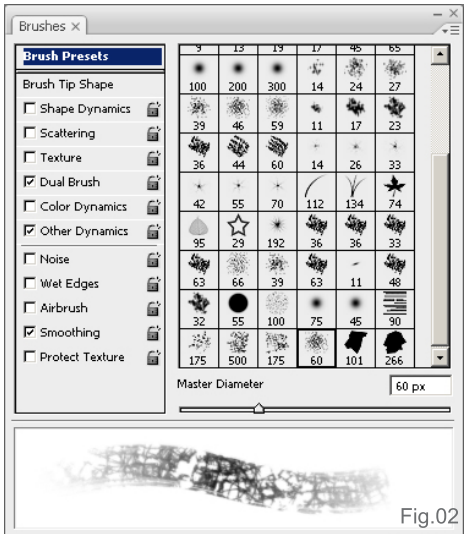
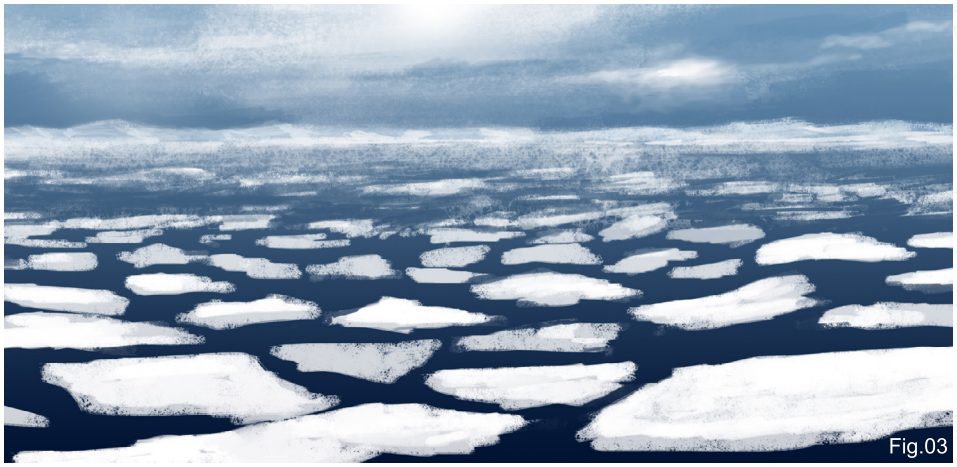
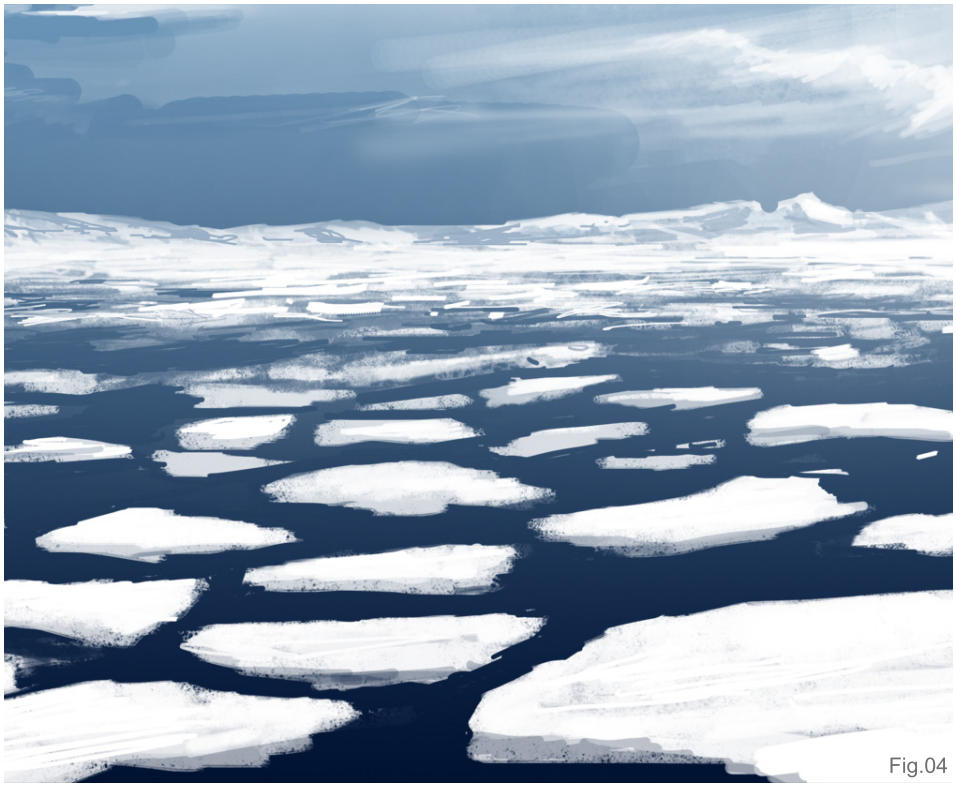


Fig.02


Fig.01


Fig.03


Fig.04

Having decided on a subject I started by creating a gradient from dark blue to a slightly lighter shade **(Fig01)**. This was going to represent the sea (lower section) and the sky along the top of the image.

On a new layer, using a custom brush **(Fig02),** I began by blocking in the rough ice shapes as well as the distant land mass and horizon **(Fig03)**.

Once I had the general perspective and horizon in position I then used a hard edged brush as an eraser to sharpen the edges of the ice flow

and neaten up the shapes. I also refined the distant hills and sky, and on a new layer set to Screen blending mode, I added a white glow to the right corner to establish the position of the sun **(Fig04)**.

With the overall composition blocked in, I decided to add the focus of the scene: our explorer. I placed him in the foreground to distance him from the arctic base that I planned to paint in later. I also added some smaller pieces of ice floating around the main blocks in order to break up the symmetry **(Fig05)**.

To enrich the image and add some variation to the water, I created a new layer set to Overlay mode at around 60% opacity and painted in a turquoise wash across the middle distance to reflect the sunlight **(Fig06)**.


Fig.05

The image was almost complete at this stage, except for a few minor refinements and the ice station of course.

I enhanced the sky slightly to reflect the blue of the sea, as well as erasing some of the ice flow on the left of the picture. I added some subtle reflections below some of the nearer ice blocks and scattered some snow along the base of the tent.

The last important feature to add was the base which the explorer is trying to signal (not much chance of that!) My plan was to add a flare that he has fired into the air (hence the upright arm) to attract the attention of the base, which makes sense in theory, but didn't work compositionally. As a result I scrapped the idea and left him simply waving, which does in fact make the situation feel far more desperate! **(Fig.07)**.


Fig.06

Richard Tilbury

For more from this artist visit:
http://www.richardtilburyart.com
Or contact:
rich@3dtotal.com


Fig.07

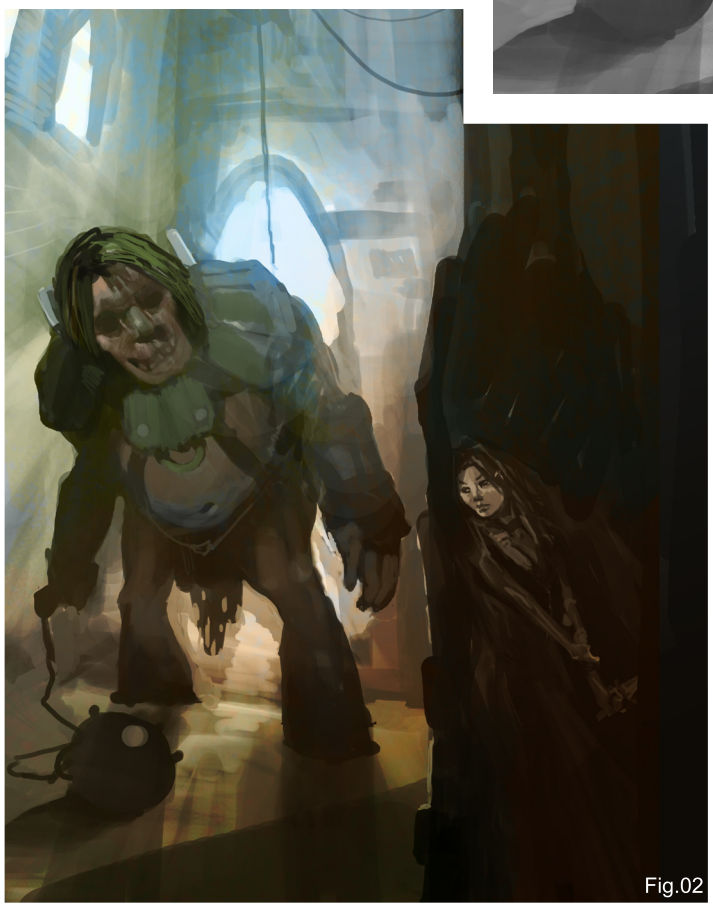
JUSTIN ALBERS

Software Used: Photoshop

Many different possibilities and directions went through my mind with this topic, but I decided I wanted to do something character-based here. One of the things I thought of was this image of a girl who has been kidnapped and imprisoned in a faraway castle but has somehow managed to break free and has almost made her escape … except the open gate is being guarded by some kind of monster. She is armed with nothing but a small knife, yet she has no choice but to either sneak around the guard or engage him. I thought such an uneven match-up would prove a decidedly difficult task!

I began by opening up a blank canvas in Photoshop CS2 and sketching out my initial ideas. I then put in my values in black and white, figuring that the main light source would be the light coming from the open gate (**Fig.01**).


Fig.01


Fig.02

I wanted the girl to be the focal point of the image, with the guard taking next priority, so I decided to put her close to the viewer and the guard in the background. Later I decided to add in the crow cage in the top of the piece, completing a triangular composition.

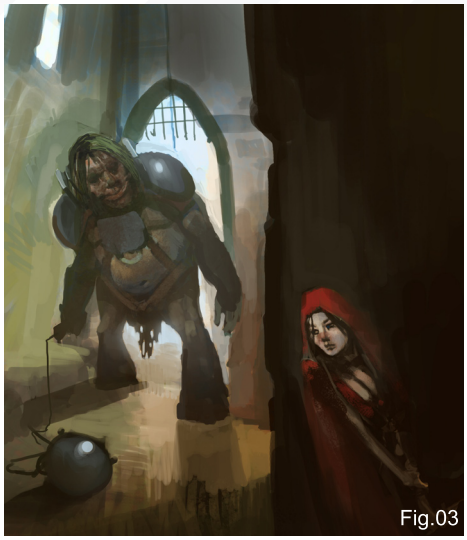
Once I had a rough idea about my values, I began putting in some preliminary colours using the Colour and Overlay layer settings. My first impression was to create a damp, greenish, musty brown colour scheme, since that's what I think of when I think of old castles and dungeons. Meanwhile the colours of the girl would be more saturated, vibrant and warm, since she's the hero (**Fig.02**).

I wasn't quite happy with the size relationship of the figures, so I started experimenting with how close and how large the girl should be. My perspective was also wonky so I needed to fix that first (**Fig.03**).

I made the guard smaller and set him back a touch by taking his values down. I also enlarged the girl, really putting her up close (**Fig.04**). At this point, I decided I needed a fresh eye and so at work I talked to the concept guys on the *Darksiders* team for a few bits of advice.

I then tweaked the composition a tad more to make the perspective better. I made the exit gate bigger and more substantial so that the guard was silhouetted against it and created a nice contrast against the dark, foreground wall. I also polished up the two figures to make them read better (**Fig.05**).

I kept tightening up the figures, checking my Navigator window and flipping the image horizontally and fixing anything that was off. I de-saturated the image a bit to match the dark, bleak mood I had originally intended, and I included a few details in the background on the other side of the gate (**Fig.06**).


Fig.03

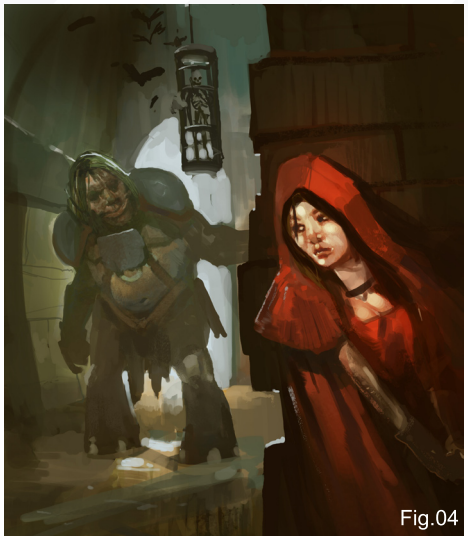
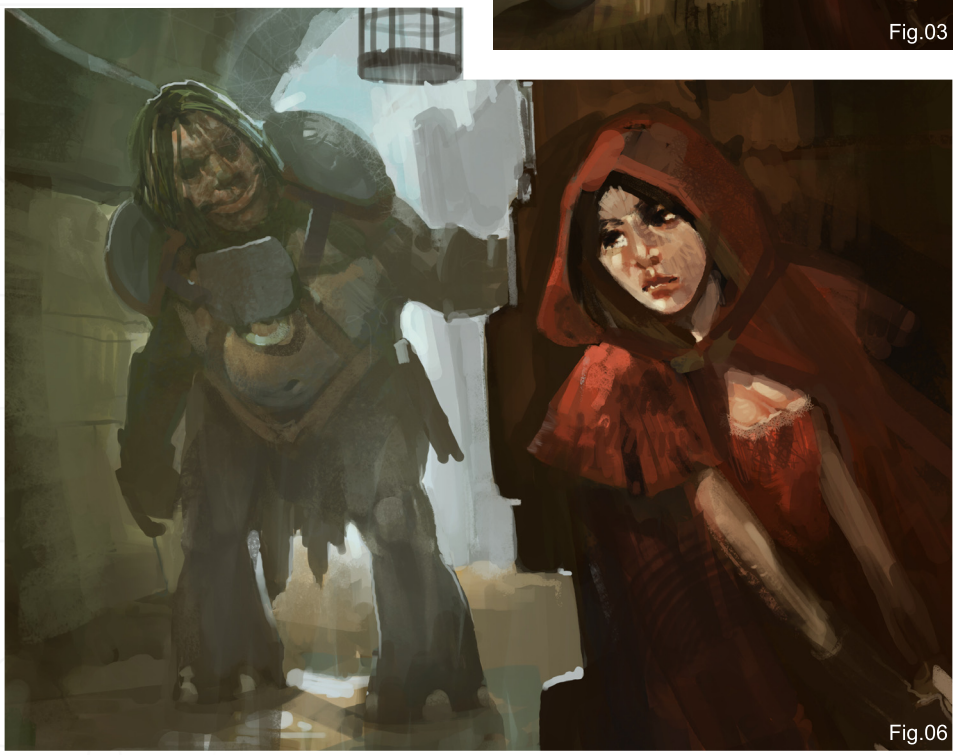

Fig.04


Fig.05


Fig.06

Here I fixed the features of the girl's face and added in the cage and a few crows. I also used more texture brushes to start creating some interest in some of these elements (**Fig.07**).


Fig.07

I painted a spot of red over the girl's face and set it on Overlay to add some saturation, colour and life to her, and to make her stand out from the greens and browns. I also added a few minor details to the ogre, being careful not to take too much attention away from the girl. I found myself having to push him back into the background often with the airbrush.

I then cleaned up the figures a bit more and added some interest to the floor in the foreground with a few textured brushstrokes.



After a few final touches to the face and armour plates of the guard, I ran a sharpen filter on the painting and called it a day (**Fig.08**). The initial idea was there, after checking the Navigator window I could see that it read well from far away, and I could always go back and finish it another day.

Thanks for reading!

Justin Albers

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Or contact:

albers.justin@gmail.com

Fig.08

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II - TRANSPORT

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SPACE PAINTING
PART 8: SPACE STATIONS

Created In: Photoshop

Introduction

Welcome back to the eighth instalment of this twelve-part tutorial series on space painting. Previously, we examined moderate to relatively large capital ships. This time around, we get to examine the depiction of truly large installations in space – namely space stations and their primary uses (for human inhabitation).

Overview

When given a typical brief of designing a space station for either illustrative or pre- and production design, there is a certain limitation to how radical the design forms can be. The more exotic the design, the more non-human it's appearance (unless that is the intent of the brief), and thus the design of such large installations should be based on existing technological limitations and designs, and extrapolated around 20-30% into the future (based roughly on a 70:30 percentage rule whereby one can define effective design being based on 70% realism, and 30% imagination).

Another consideration to keep in mind for structures larger than 100 feet in height and width, is panel lines. Capital ships and smaller space vessels tend to have more discernible details and obvious panel lines (that suggest the vehicle comprises of various parts) and other details such as piping, gears, thrusters, windows, hatches and signs. The larger an object becomes, the less discernible these become, and it may appear to consist of almost featureless, flattish positive and negative shapes and surfaces. This is not to suggest there are no divisive lines; however panel lines on objects such as space stations may truly be a giant canal or a great grouping of massive tubular structures.

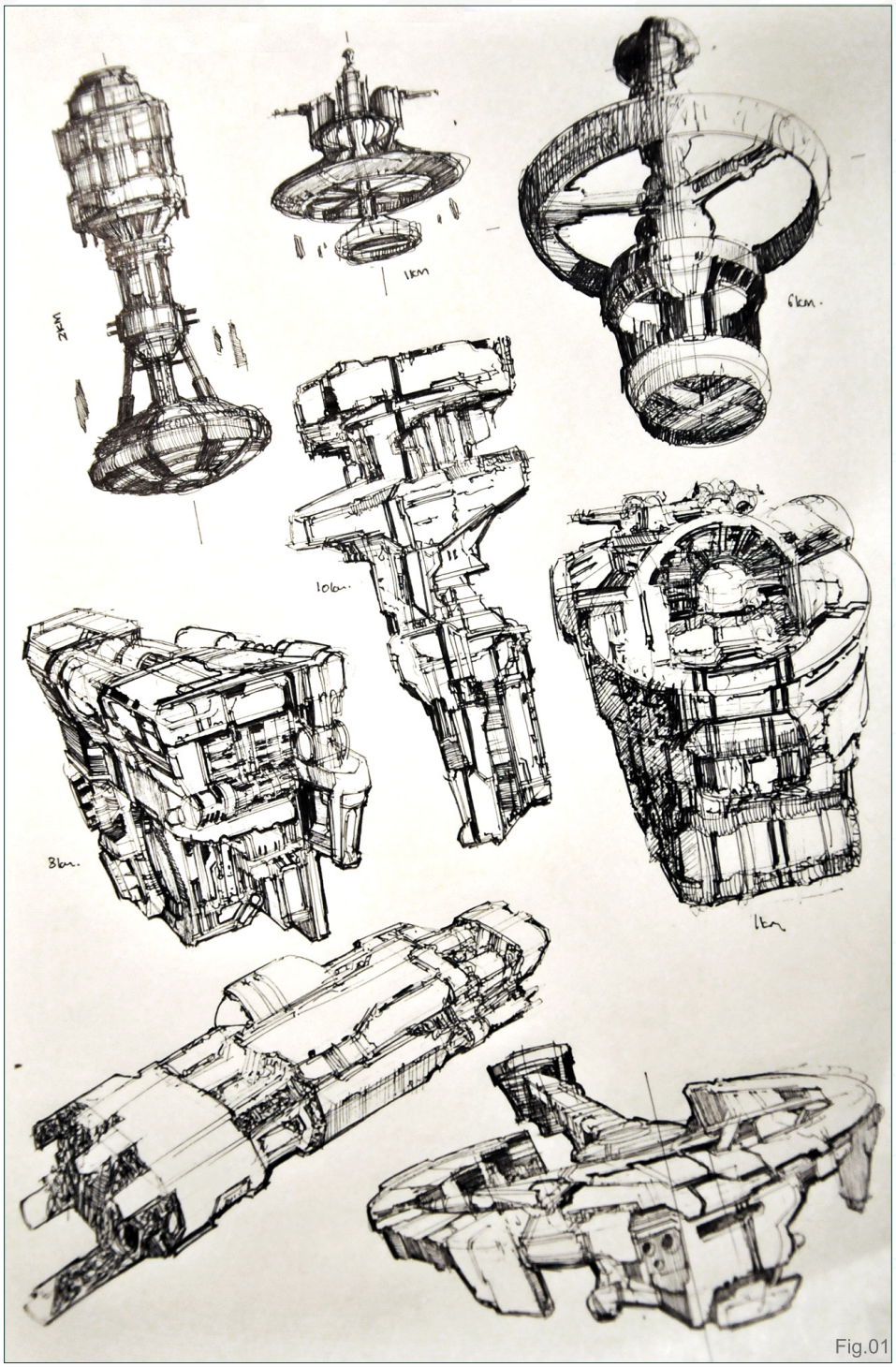


Fig.01

I: Shapes

To continue with the idea of construction via an exploration of shape and design, we need only look at the classic *Wipeout* racing game series. These games featured strong shapes and overall centric design aesthetics by the (unfortunately now defunct) legendary, Sheffield-based graphic design agency, **Design Republic**. Similarly, space stations can be generalised into variations of cuboids, cylinders or trapezoids with permutations of irregular extrusions, angular facets or smooth surfaces.

Fig.01 shows an assortment of semi-detailed thumbnails that begin as a general outline form,

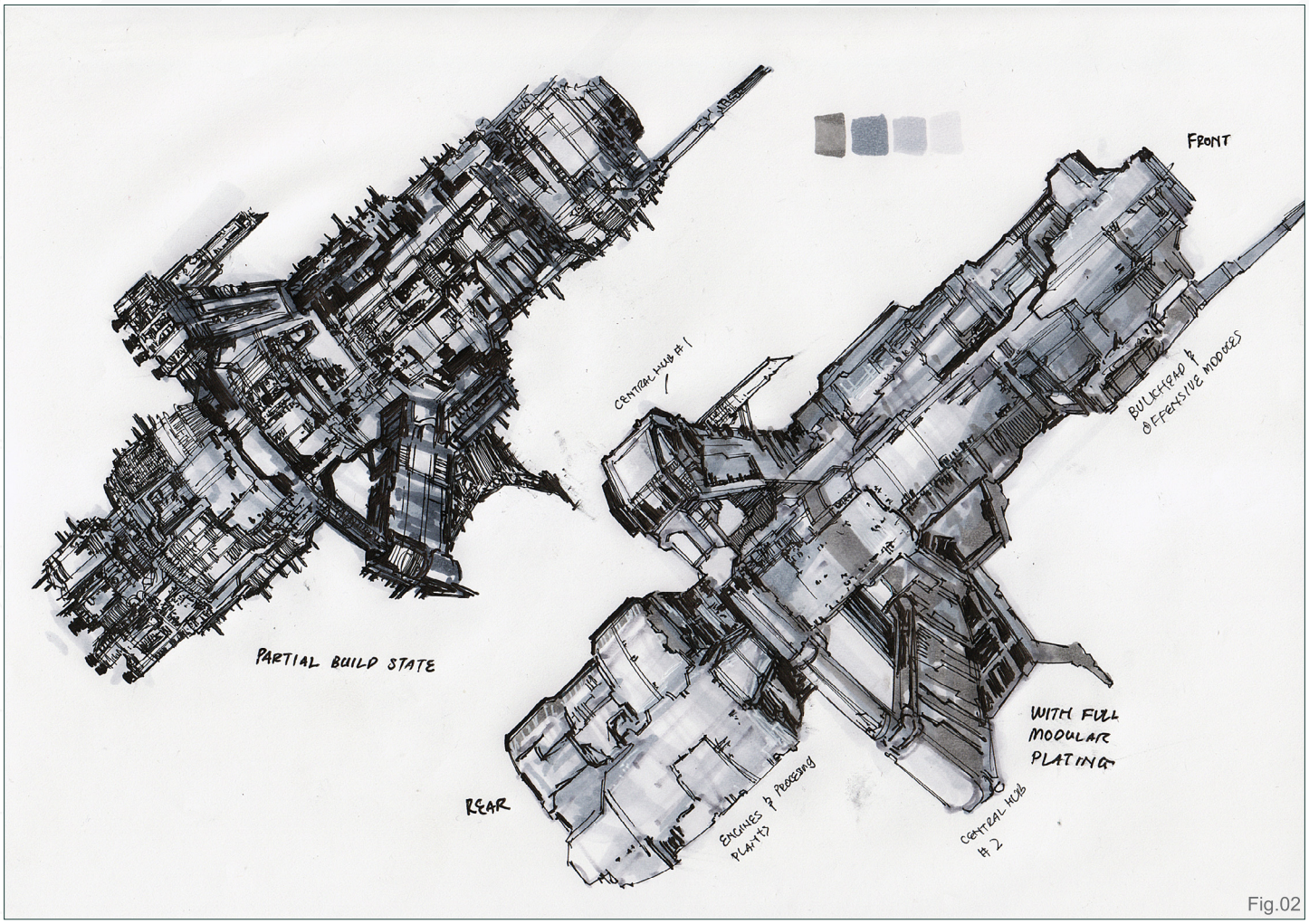


Fig.02

and are subsequently worked into with various divisions and aesthetics, and layers of extrusion and intrusions. Working from the top left down towards the bottom right, the various styles and shapes that are explored range from industrial, cylindrical and modular towards the more exotic. The images at the top represent more conventional modular and symmetrical designs, whilst the middle images are more cuboid and lack a distinct shape. The lower images are more semi-organic or seamless, as if cut from a single slab of the same material.

Essentially, you can explore space technology as follows:

1. Conventional – Cylindrical, modular, semi-industrial, almost pin-point LED lighting and symmetrical

2. Advanced – More streamline or grandiose forms with less joins, piping and streamed lighting

3. Exotic/Alien-esque – Forms are more organic and smooth in nature; asymmetrical and fantastical shapes may be employed; generally appear highly advanced or non-manmade

Feel free to explore conventional and unconventional designs to achieve something that suits your production or environment, whilst keeping in mind the technological restraints of what your designing.

Battle Space Station Design: Construction States

In the production of space stations, it can be useful to envisage how it is built. Generally, the idea of a partially built, fully built and fully ruinous state comes to mind when considering the production of a space station.

In **Fig.02**, we depict a more militaristic space station in two states:

1. Partially built

2. Armoured

Using grey markers and marker paper, the structure is loosely based upon a cylindrical structure with four core values of grey: 10%, 30%, 50%, and neutral grey 50%. The overall forms are explored initially utilising the grey markers, 10% and 30%. One can create a varying stippled effect and abstract shapes using the chisel edged tip of most popular markers.

With regards to the **partially built** station design (far left), a state of construction can be accomplished by imagining the entire form bristling with partially connected tubes, external rigging, semi-formed plates and extruded layered forms. Another way to consider this is to imagine a gigantic circuit board overlaid onto a long cylindrical object when you design your space station.

In contrast, when considering a **fully armoured** station design, the main idea is to convey a sense of interconnected plates and joins that fit together logically and with purpose. In addition, to add that menacing look, some suggestion of various weapon modules such as an extended frontal spike or a set of snub cylindrical shapes can help show-off the more aggressive form when viewed at a distance. As such, study of various predators can help convey the sense of power such as:

1. Wild Boar – Squat and powerful

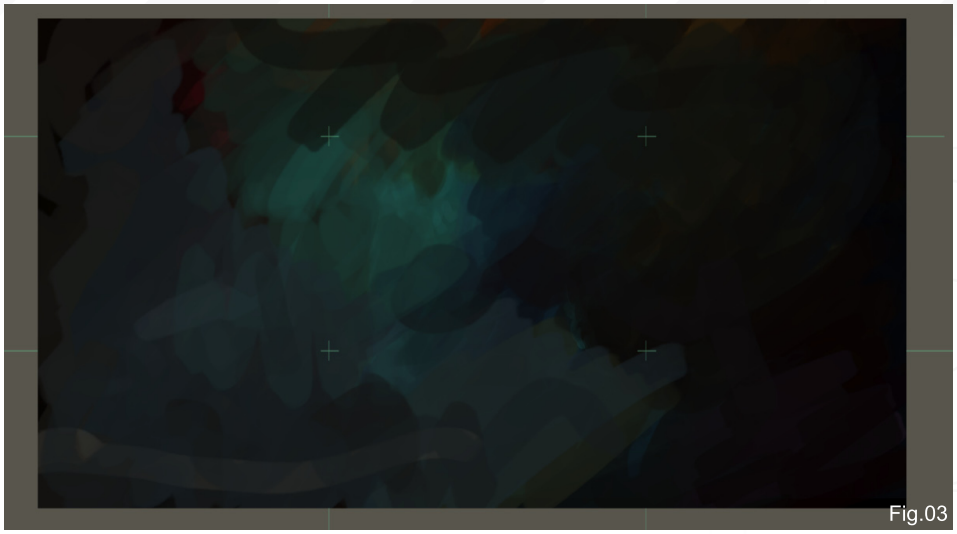
2. Barracuda – Lean, mean, aerodynamic and armed with an amazing array of teeth

3. Crocodile – Missile shaped, low profile, powerful and heavily armoured top carapace; armed with multiple saw teeth, powerful jaws, powerful limbs and a tail

4. Anglerfish – 'Lophiiforme' lure (bony growth from its head acting like bait) complimented by a wide jaw armed with rows of long, spiked teeth, with a jaw and stomach that can be extended, allowing it to engulf up to twice its body size



Fig.04


Fig.03

Other predators to consider could include **eagle, cat** (**lion, tiger, panther), wolf** (etc.)

II: Illustrating Galaxy Space Station X

Setting up a space scene can take all sorts of routes. Previously we've explored an impressionistic **John Berkey** approach to illustration, a greyscale to colour approach, and lastly an industrial design with a 'form follows function' approach. In contrast, with this chapter we can now explore a more theatrical lighting situation, favoured by movies/game concepts, with the added free range "artistic license" for extra seasoning.

The thing is, for any production within a project, company or non personal work, one needs to constantly be aware of the fact that the artist has to balance realism with the target audience (i.e. the vision the client desires, the evocation the end viewer desires, and what someone wants you to achieve). It's about what the other person wants to feel, see and envision. Art for oneself, however, can sometimes produce some very interesting results. For when you are your own art director - your own painter for your own desires - then how realistic or abstract your image is depicted is entirely up to you. You can determine what the end audience feels.

Sometimes, the end result may not be as polished or finished as a professional piece requested by your client. Perhaps this may be because work produced for a client taps into a wider pool of design constraints and specific art direction, and involves at least two people in the creative process. Whereas, as your own art director, this feedback and to and fro process is less evident.

Setting up a Galaxy

For this illustration, the shot is produced without any preliminary study or definite design worked out. All that I know is that it will involve a typical widescreen/landscape aspect ratio.

Step 1: With reference to **Fig.03**, a greenish blue hue is the intended colour palette. The canvas is partitioned into thirds to provide compositional tools if required (the rule of thirds). A light source is established early on, but nothing too bright, to allow a narrow range of colour and value to work with initially.

I've chosen to provide an extra "bleed" area, reminiscent of how one may paint on a traditional canvas/watercolour canvas. Marked on the edges of these borders are also the one third marks (**Fig.04**).

Step 2: The next step is to expand this canvas more to include a counterbalance, such as saturated clouds of ochre (faint hint of yellow-orange - complimentary towards the cyan) and neutral blues. Broad strokes are best used for

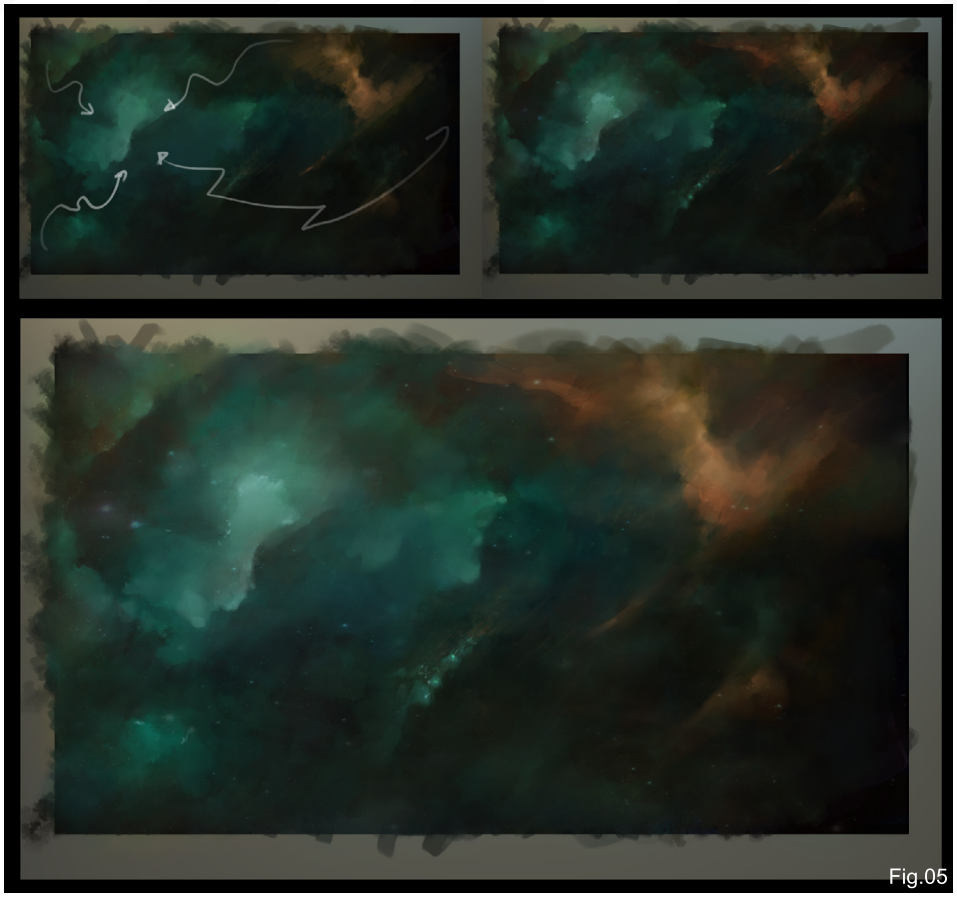
this initial stage to provide a rich gas cloud style in space. Clouds tend to have hard edges, and thus the use of broad strokes would work well (**Fig.04**).

Step 3: Once a general palette is established, areas of contrast are defined and areas where the forms are softer can be blended to produce mid tones. In addition, economic brushstrokes are applied in the direction of the plane or counter to that. It's sometimes nice to leave some remnant strokes to help build up a random textural feel towards the background.

Step 4: The next step is to establish the light source and values as a compositional tool (**Fig.05**). The eye is drawn to areas of light and high contrast and thus the warmer orange-yellow gas clouds are softer, with less contrast.

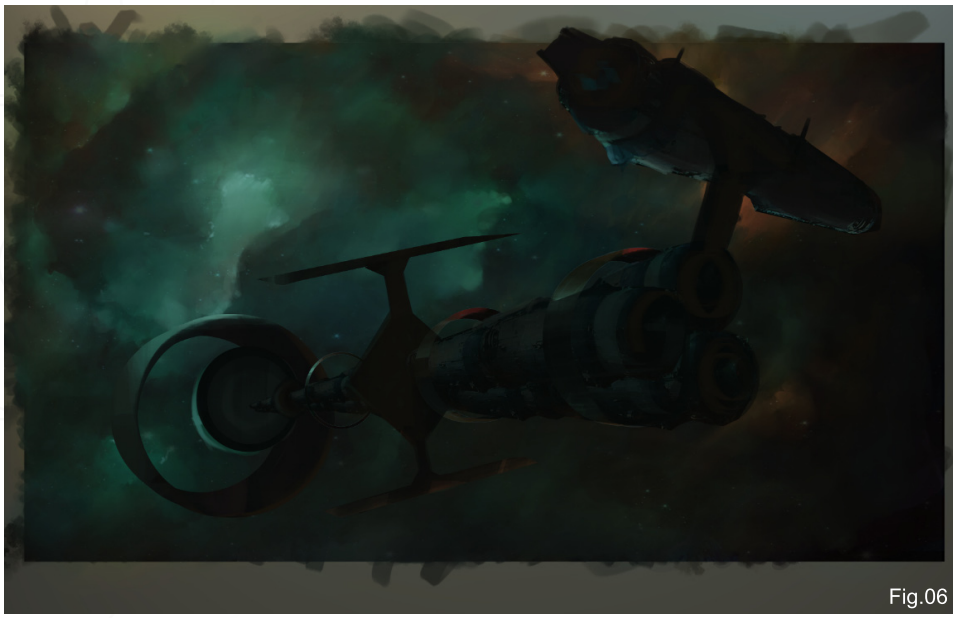
Step 5: It is at this juncture that star systems and the brighter stars are established. Clusters of faint stars are unlikely to be seen by the naked eye, and will just appear as a lighter shade of gas clouds within a nebullaic region. Try to keep all the glows in check and not too bright compared to the brightest region in the nebula cloudscape.

Step 6: Try to finish the overall cloudscape as best as you can at this point. The chances are that once this is locked down and "signed off", you will not need to come back to it.


Fig.05

III: Space Station

The next step is to incorporate a typical space station design within the environment. Unlike the previous tutorials there are no finalised designs and we are exploring this illustration purely on an ad-hoc basis. What I can venture at this point is that the cylindrical 1950's style modules hold a certain retro appeal, and perhaps we can explore this further in the next section.


Fig.06

Painting with Light and Form

Step 1: Using primitive shapes of just cylinders, toroids and various flat panels, the initial design is blocked out as various interlocking shapes and forms (**Fig.06**).

Subsequently, using the colour and light sources established in the background, these are painted relative to the plane and angle of incidence to the light sources. For example, light travels in straight lines, and as such, any material that light encounters is both reflected and absorbed (to an extent) towards the viewer accordingly.

Step 2: Now, if a realistic image is being sought, then the current illustration can be said to reflect the actual conditions as seen by the naked eye in space. And therefore could be said to

be almost “finalised”. However, for artistic and illustrative purposes, further levels of detail need to be included to help the viewer read the overall image even more clearly.

A point to note is the strange horizontal cylinder near the top of the image. This depicts the first part of a large toroidal ring being constructed on top of the space station. This can provide a visual point of interest.

Step 3: The next stage is to make the level of detail and form more discernible to the viewer. Towards this end, the forward segment of the space station has appealing shapes that suggest a cluster of cylinders grouped together, and surrounded by a larger band of a toroid (**Fig.07**).



Fig.07

This outer band has a freewheeling longitudinal axis to provide a subtle artificial gravity for long term space travel, commute and habitation, and as a simple solution to counter bone density loss until alternative solutions such as bone supplementation or gene therapy are developed.

Step 4: Finer subtle details such as rim lighting and graduated edges are to be painstakingly added next, using a mixture of selections and simple painting techniques to blend various direct and ambient lighting sources. In addition, simple numerical decals are selected, warped and masked (onto a new layer) on various modules to help reinforce that element of human manufacture. These include adding tiny banks of lit windows, access panels and hatches that are probably not seen immediately except by those with a discerning eye.

Step 5: The next few steps are merely applying a methodological discipline towards the whole space station design without risking over-detailing on areas which do not require detail (**Fig.08**). This involves ensuring shadows are cast accordingly onto the various cylindrical forms, and, utilising the same principle, have painted bands of alternating darker colour onto a base white (of the overall station) – which is incidentally useful for reducing internal absorbed heat and thus allowing a nice use of hot and cold complementaries.



Fig.08

John Berkey would famously paint ambient, cool blues onto areas of relief on his primarily white base ships, with bands of red, orange and warm yellows for areas with light. And this works very well in depicting illustrative examples of space stations and space transport.

Step 6: Further details applied towards the front and rear sections of the space station involve adding further rim lights and glows accordingly (**Fig.09**), so that the overall form may read reasonably well. These include adding subtle panel lines and colour gradation similar to that

produced by bouncing lighting off an aluminium coated pipe.

Step 7: Lastly, it can be useful to check that all the proportions are in place and fit accordingly (**Fig.10**). Areas to probably correct are the large toroidal shapes housed towards the rear (area situated furthest from the viewer) end.

Getting Your Space Station Up & Running

To finish off your space station illustration, you can liven it up with various objects of interest.

Step 1: Various capital ship shapes are added in the far distance to help give the space station a sense of scale (**Fig.11**). In the foreground element, a basic tri-pronged cylindrical object is painted in to denote larger space ships. These have relatively short plasma contrails and a specific point is made to ensure the wingman is significantly smaller and closer towards the space station, again to show its potential scale. In the mid ground there are three groups of sorties that help denote a flight of active space vessels performing their protective defence roles.

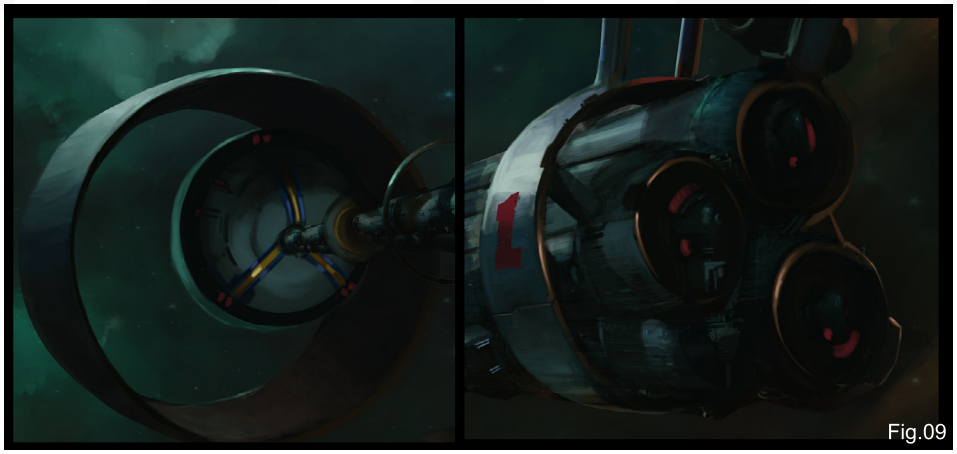

Fig.09


Fig.10


Fig.11

Step 2: To reiterate, relative scale is hard to judge in space due to the lack of atmospheric perspective. Having said that, one can cheat a little by adding some very faint atmospheric perspective, which can be deemed as reflected light from space dust and debris.

Step 3: In **Fig.12**, the core structure of the larger outer ring is finally installed. Along this circular path, various modular segments and panels will be installed to form a new toroidal segment for future low gravity habitation and storage areas.


Fig.12


Fig.13

Step 4: In the next step (**Fig.13**), the close-up details of the toroidal ring structure are being constructed. To further reinforce it, negative black shapes are cut into the ring to give it depth, breadth and three-dimensionality.
To finish up, various perspective issues are addressed, including the upper flat solar panels and the large spherical engine quarters (far left end), and there you have it – a fully working space station (**Fig.14**).


Fig.14

IV: Blowing It Up

In the second element of this workshop, we plan to blow up the space station. Yes, we're going to blow it up to explore how light and large explosions can be depicted whilst still using only simple forms, to cast light and shadow and minimal detail.


Fig.15

Step 1: The first step is to break the whole station up (**Fig15**). Assuming you have kept the whole station on a separate layer/group from the background, it is only a matter of selecting different segments and relocating them at variable distances from their original location (as a whole). The trick is to not scatter the various parts too far from their point of origin. This is so that you can depict the station as part-drifting-part-exploding/burning in space.



Fig.16

The thing to remember is that unless there are reservoirs of oxygen in abundance, it is unlikely that these fires and explosions will last long. Chances are they would appear as a bright flash, whilst electrical fires arc from point to point. Nevertheless, capturing such key scenes are fundamental as the pay off for main shots within any film or game project.

Step 2: Next, on a layer below, a base colour of orange is applied on areas which may contain reservoirs of oxygen (**Fig 16**). Again, one may argue that such explosions will tend to burn blue primarily, but choosing a more realistic option tends to clash with the ambient colour chosen.

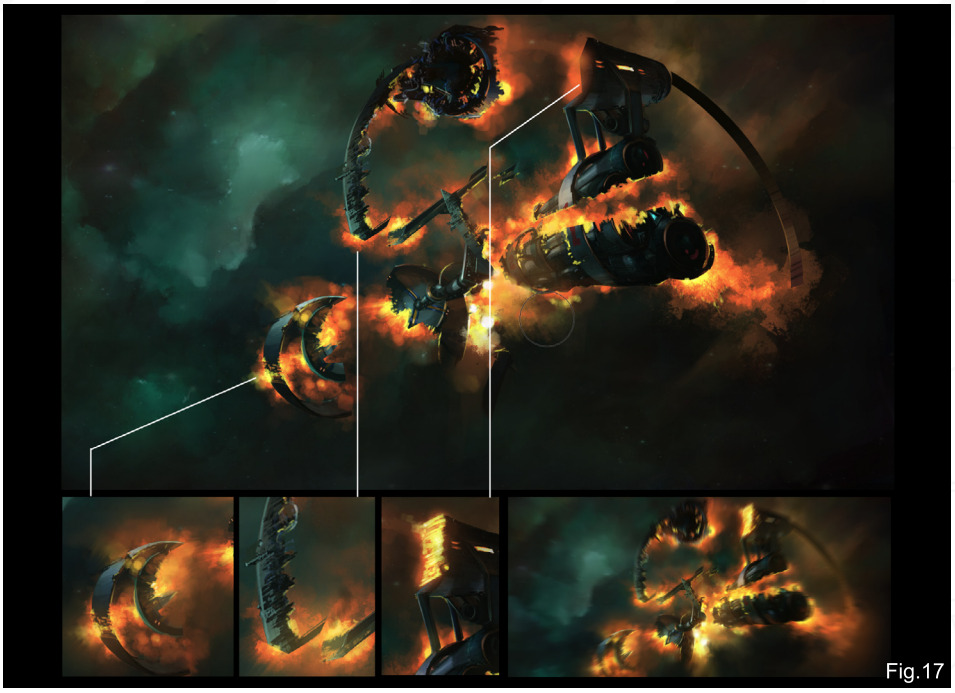
Step 3: An artistic choice would be to stick to the familiar orange-yellow fires seen in typical land-based explosions - so long as one understands the active myths and choices made in perpetuating such images in popular culture, all in the name of artistic license. Sometimes, you will not have a choice in the matter. It is therefore advisable to keep this "effect glow" on a totally separate layer so that you may change its hue, colour and saturation easily in the future. To go one step further, have the whole form of

it masked out onto an alpha channel (just as a precaution).

Step 4: Subsequently, a base yellow glow should be applied towards the central areas of the explosions. Fire tends to be bright and desaturated in the middle with tinges of saturated red on its periphery.

Step 5: As before, it's a matter of methodically applying the same principles of glow and lighting throughout the whole image and lighting every area behind the forms (whereby the overall forms act as a mask against the glow in contrast).

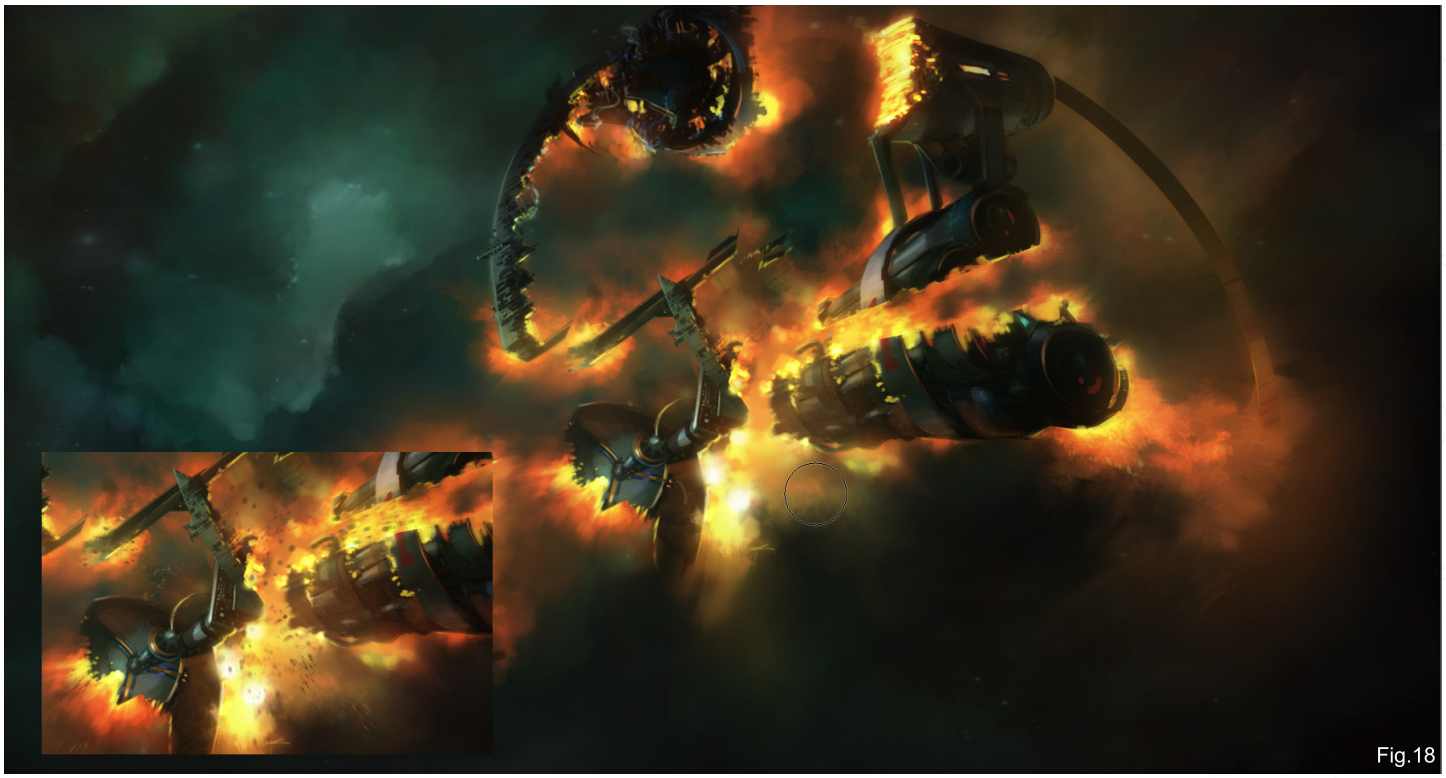
Step 6: Now that you have tackled depicting the glows behind the space station, repeat the same principles in front of the station onto a new layer (**Fig.17**). The nice thing is that a judicious use of atmospheric perspective is entitled to suggest various objects being in front and behind one another, relative to the explosion.


Fig.17

Step 7: In the bottom right is the whole illustration applied with a Blur > Radial Blur set to zoom at 10%. Ensure that the whole image is duplicated beforehand, before applying the blur. Then apply a layer mask onto the whole image, as if the whole effect has not occurred, before repainting the blurred elements onto any peripheral edge of the explosion and objects.

A good source of reference for this are racing photography, which enable us to study the effects of objects in firm focus whilst the edges or backgrounds become blurred. Such study is critical in being able to determine your field of focus, and how you choose to depict the action of your scene.

Step 8: The next step is to add some small degrees of debris, depicted by tinier fragments exploding from the central explosion (**Fig.18**). Such finer details may not always be necessary,


Fig.18

however it can help to add a further degree of realism to your illustration of a key scene.

Step 9: Lastly, you can depict various vessels escaping the blast by producing various shots of large vessels heading out from the centre of the field of focus. Towards this end, we will block out a number of different shapes without any set design (**Fig.19**).


Fig.19

Step 10: In **Fig.20a – b**, a relatively aesthetic looking form is used to depict a large frigate-like ship (lower left). Using the local lighting from the explosion, red and green complementaries are applied throughout the whole form, with tiny rim lights on areas that turn.

Similarly, the larger destroyers (upper left) are blocked out using ambient green values initially, with bands of orange to help define the whole form. On second analysis, these shapes appear not as streamline and thus a small transformation and erasure help provide a more streamlined form.

These shapes are duplicated at various sizes and placements to depict distance and scale. To really finish it all off, add some subtle contrails and glows to suggest engine washes and that these vessels are escaping from either the station or departing from a successful raid.

And there you have it – a fully blown up space station!


Fig.20a

Conclusion

This concludes the transport section of this space series. For those who have followed this tutorial series from the beginning, I hope that a good range of basics and fundamental (no holds barred) approaches towards tackling each theme and design according to the desired end result has been of some use. Our next step will be to cover Sci-Fi environments, interiors and mood shots that depict key scenes within movies and games. As always, please feel free to drop me an email with any enquiries,

feedback or help in relation to the content within these space tutorial series.

Dr Chee Ming Wong

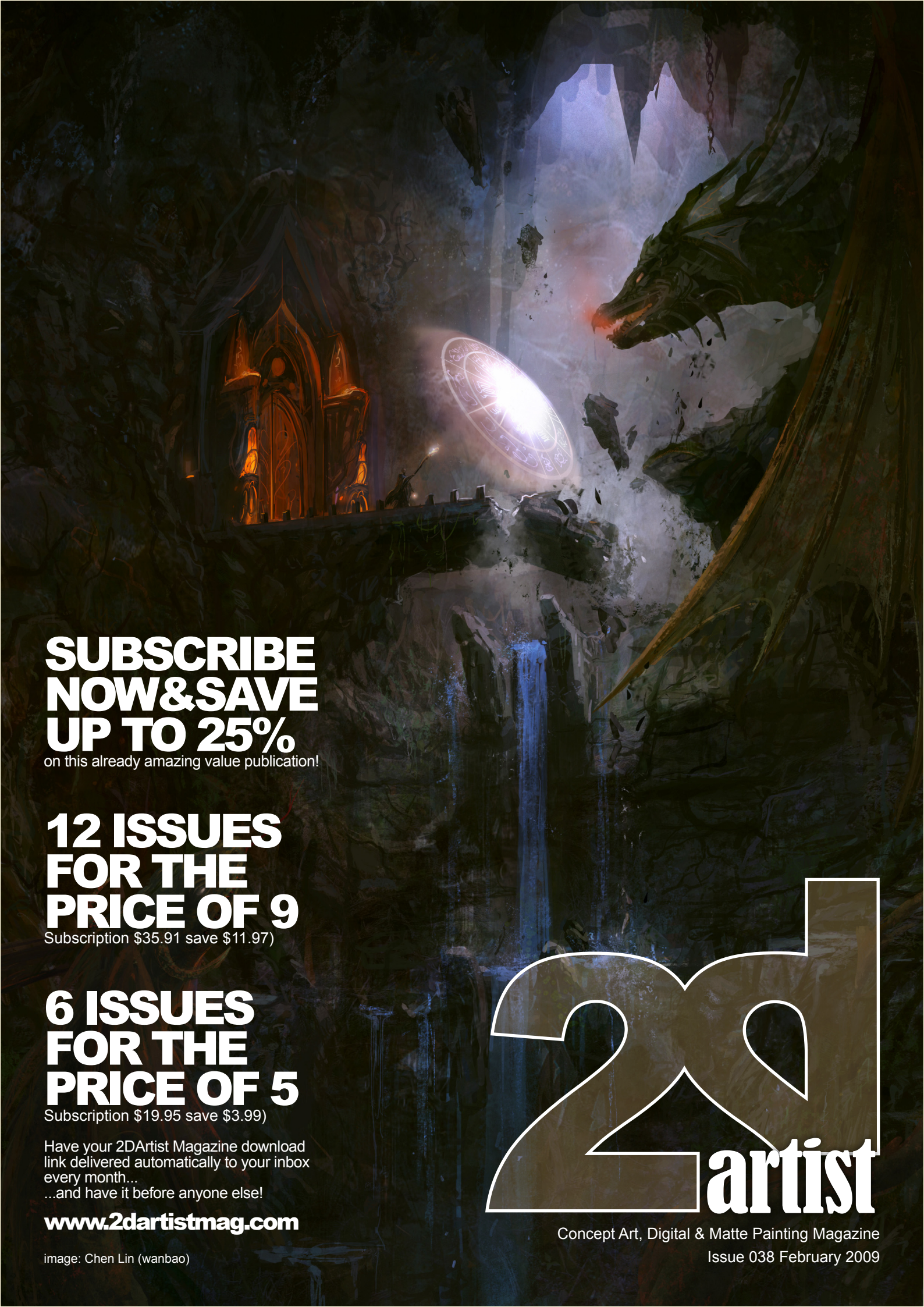
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Concept Art, Digital & Matte Painting Magazine
Issue 038 February 2009



Nicolas Villeminot takes us through the creation process of his image “Robot”

nico 2008

ROBOT

Created In: Photoshop

Introduction

Each year, the French forum Café Salé launches an exhibition based around a specific theme and asks its members to create an image based on it; in 2008 the theme was “Robots”. When I thought about doing a robot, I thought it would be cool to make a big, massive “mecha”, because I’d never tried to make one before. But instead of doing this I eventually went in the opposite direction and decided to do a small, lonely robot that seems vulnerable; I envisioned him as being sad or afraid of something. Because I wanted him to be noticeable by people, I chose to give the robot a weird



Fig.02



Fig.01

design so that people would remember him. I quickly came up with the idea of starting with a centaur-like robot and adding some elements to him (like a collar or a breathing device) that might suggest he’s sick or damaged. I then searched for a story to tell the viewer who and what this robot was … Where would he be? I then imagined that this robot would be in an unhealthy location to make his vulnerability more effective. So I imagined a brief story in which the robot would be in a hospital where vicious experiments are being done on robots.

Sketch

I always start sketching on paper; it’s the best way for me to look for ideas. I then open up Photoshop to improve the sketch and remove any flaws. My initial sketches (**Fig.01** & **Fig.02**)

were just about the robot; I wanted him to be elegant, with an Art Nouveau feel in some parts (**Fig.03**). I also wanted people to empathise with him, despite his weird look. So I gave him a big head with big eyes, so that he looks like a baby in some small way.

After looking at my improved design of the robot (**Fig.04**), I thought he would look more vulnerable if I showed him from behind – so that's what I did (**Fig.05**)! I finally decided to set the story in the engine room of the hospital, with an industrial look to create a contrast with the robot's design. I then imagined the robot to be chained – another way to try and make people feel some sympathy for this little robot.

I started to sketch the set for the robot (**Fig.06**), during which I added some more elements, like the chains and the torture devices (**Fig.07**). As there would be a lot of mechanical elements, I used the ellipsoid selection and the line tool of Photoshop to make them with precision. Because I did not make a proper sketch of the composition, except for the main elements, I often changed the position of each element. Photoshop allowed me to have all the elements


Fig.03

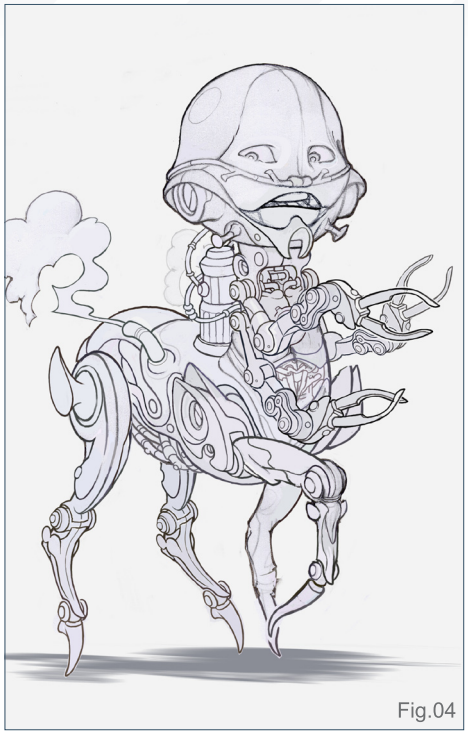

Fig.04


Fig.05

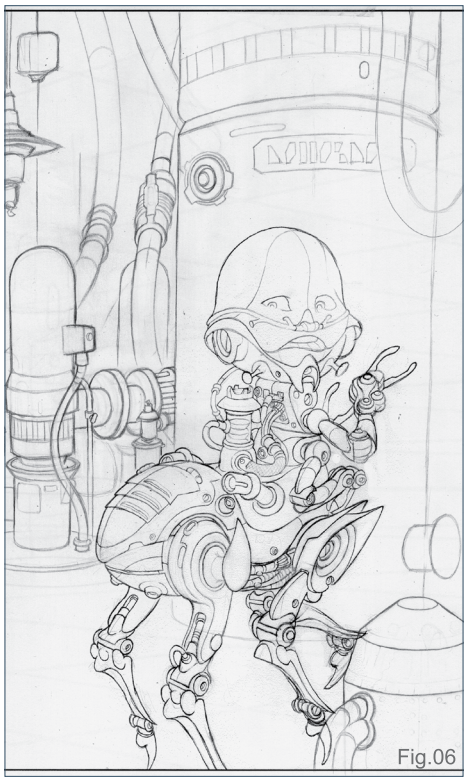

Fig.06


Fig.07

on separate layers so I could change their size or position easily. After adding some more elements and redefining others, like the torture devices, the line art of the scene was done (**Fig.08**).

The robot's design was also slightly modified in some parts during the process. At this stage, the image was pretty close to my initial vision: a frightened robot trapped in a hostile environment.

Colour

Next step: colours! To concentrate only on values, I started with a monochromatic palette to define where the main light would come

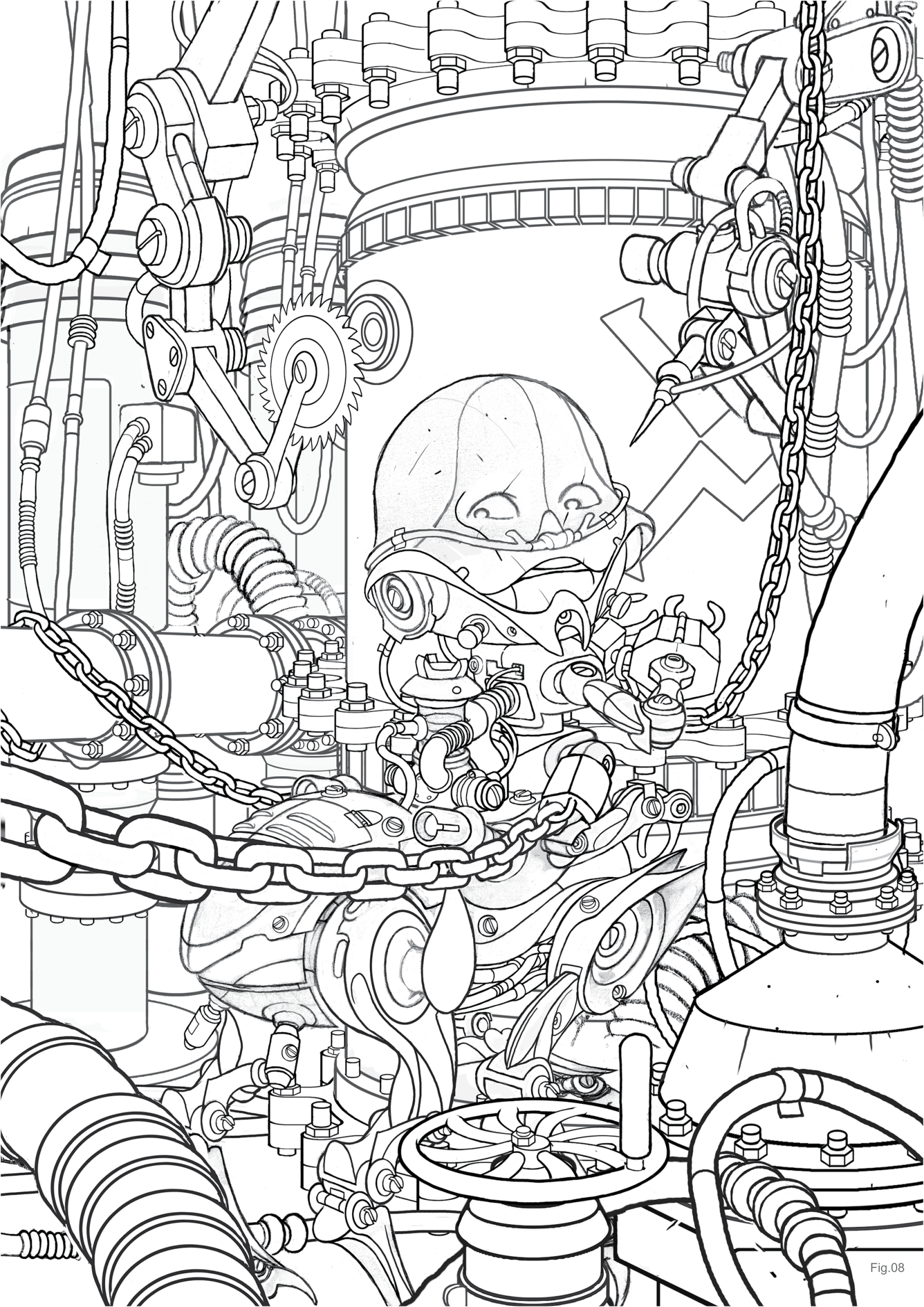


Fig.08

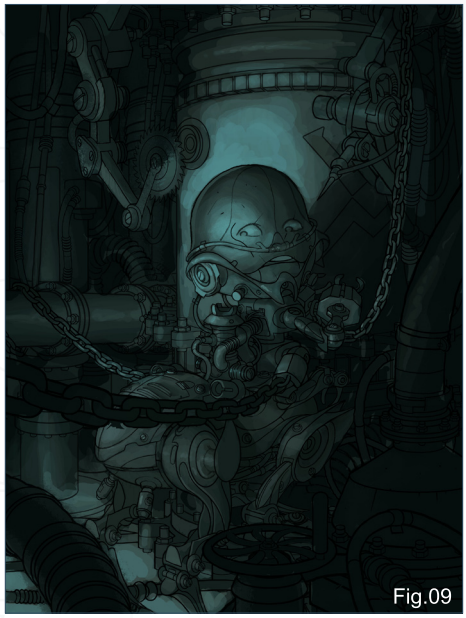

Fig.09


Fig.10


Fig.11

from (**Fig.09**). In my mind, the light from the left indicates that someone is going to enter the room and the robot understands that he is about to have a bad moment … To paint the rough version of the lighting, I created a new layer and put it under the line art layer, which was in Multiply mode, and then later added more painting over the line (with another layer) in order to hide it.

When I was happy with the values, which was a long process because it defined whether the image was going to be realistic or not (**Fig.10**), I started to add some more colours, beginning with the main element of the image: the robot. I decided early on in the process that I would use reddish tones to focus the attention on him. So to colour the robot I used a gradient map layer to achieve different colours for the dark and light values that I could then combine with another layer on which I had the red robot's silhouette in Overlay mode, set to 45% opacity. I also added some more elements to the scene: smoke around the robot to make it stand out from the shadows and make him more readable, a blue light coming from the right, and some blood behind the robot to suggest that he might be more than just a robot (**Fig.11**).

In the following steps, I fixed the colour of the blood – which was too red and looked unrealistic – added a kind of glow on the left to focus where the robot was looking, and made the right blue light brighter (**Fig.12**). In the end I made the glow brighter to give more contrast to the scene - to make the image less monochromatic - and I added some rusty textures onto the pipe on the left of the picture and to other parts of the image. I changed the colours of the torture devices slightly to make them "pop" a bit more from the rest of the picture. To make the robot more realistic I added some rust and other scratches on it so that he looked a bit damaged from being kept captive in this deadly place. The splashes of blood behind the robot were also


Fig.12

fixed again to make them look more realistic. And finally, I added some blur to the foreground to give the image more depth. Et voilà! The image was done (**Fig.13**)!

Nicolas Villeminot

For more from this artist visit:
http://electronico.cgsociety.org/gallery/
Or contact:
nicolas.villeminot@orange.fr



Fig.13

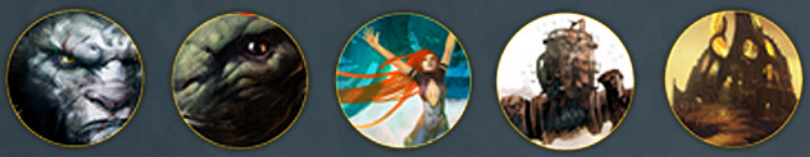
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Digital Painting Tutorial Series EBook

Introduction:

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This tutorial eBook also includes 84 free downloadable brushes.



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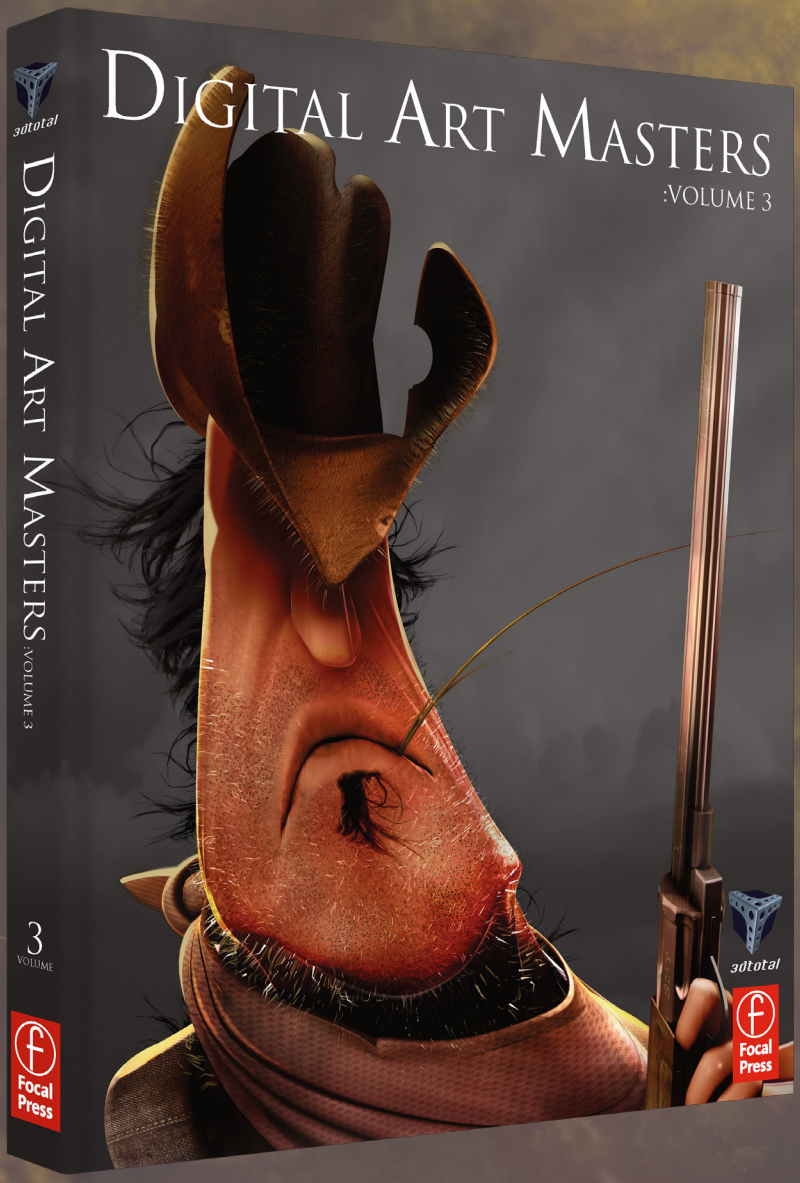
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This month we feature:

"Torturement"
by Henna Uoti



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The following shots of the “Torturement” book pages are featured here in full-resolution and can be read by zooming in...



Torturement

By Henna Uoti



Introduction

The idea came to me in the middle of another painting. From the beginning, it struck to me as something really dark yet at the same time truly enchanting. Inspired, I dropped the painting I was working on and started searching for the right reference pictures...

Process

I spent some time trying different kinds of compositions and color schemes. I decided I wanted the girl to be almost centered, placed perhaps a little more to the right side, leaving much empty space behind her to cause some tension.

After I had the concept fully thought out in my mind, I started painting it without too much trouble. My first step was to begin vaguely sketching the character and other important elements. I used a tiny brush for really quick and simplified line art. I wanted to make sure I did not make the line art too detailed so it would not limit my creativity. Instead of just filling my line art with color, like one would do when coloring in the lines of a coloring book, I fully painted over my lines, carefully correcting any possible mistakes which I may have made earlier.



Fig.02



Fig.01



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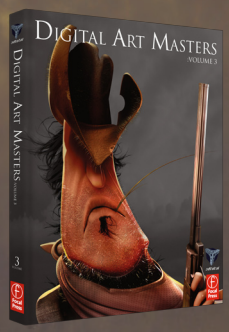
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I then created a new layer and started sloppily blotching in some colors and shapes (**Fig.01**). I did this using a relatively big speckled brush (seen later in **Fig.05**), and reduced the size as I progressed with the painting. My method is not to expect the figure to be so many heads high, nor the head so many eyes wide; instead I rely on careful observation. I tried to keep the whole painting at the same stage while I worked so that I wouldn't end up in the situation where I had finished the face, but the background and other elements were still in the line art phase and with the background color showing everywhere. Colors hugely affect each other, so it's crucial to have them placed right from the very beginning!

Once I'd finished this stage, the painting already looked quite right to me; in fact, if I was after a looser, impressionistic style, I could very well have left the painting as it was and called it “finished” (**Fig.02**). To lift the painting to more realistic heights, it's really just a matter of polishing your brushstrokes and adding more details. Whenever I feel stuck with the painting, I simply change the size or settings of my brush and soon I find myself back on track.

A good painting is always a combination of good background and good character, so I try to give the background at least as much attention that I will be giving to the figure (**Fig.03a–b**). The way I paint backgrounds is almost always the same: I start with very small, unnaturally sharp brushstrokes which I later almost fully paint over with different types of airbrushes. Though this method can be very slow and nerve-breaking, to me, a



Fig.03b



Fig.03a

good detailed base has often proved to be the key for believable realism! I find it much easier to soften or blend too detailed brushstrokes into the painting, whereas, on the contrary, it can be almost impossible to pull sharp edges where there haven't previously been any.

Reworking

The painting was originally painted in October 2007, but I chose to rework it for the book entry. Aside from adding some tonal variation, I added some butterflies to improve the storytelling (**Fig.04**). Originally, the brush strokes were much rougher, but I decided to heavily smooth some of those out. I consider the smooth finish that you see here one of my latest tricks for creating an illusion of depth. Used in the right places I have learned that it really takes away the flatness of a painting and adds a romantic element. I have also learned that my clients often prefer the softer look.

Conclusion

Technically, this one was really interesting to paint. In the early steps, when I was starting to sketch the leaves in, I used a variety of brushes with the spacing almost always set up to 100%. Instead of the long sweep, the brush then creates a line of several dots (**Fig.05**). I had almost never done so before, but now believe that it is an essential time-saver! I'll definitely be using this tool more in future, too. I love it when I feel I have learned something new.

The reworking of the image really changed my attitude towards this piece, and it was when the painting really started to breathe. There is a saying that it's fairly easy to reach 80% realism, but to reach 90% will take as long as it took to reach 80%, and to reach 95% will take three times as long. That's exactly how I felt. I feel embarrassed to think how many hours I must have spent just tweaking the colors and playing with the lighting! The computer makes it so easy to edit things, but one needs to stop at some point.



Fig.05

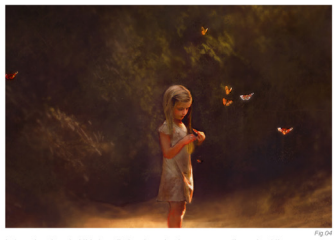


Fig.04

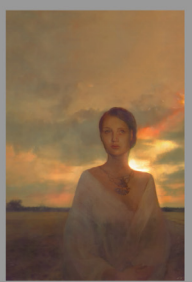
Later, when I posted this to galleries, I received some suggestions about the composition and the cropping. Though I had my reasons for the unbalanced composition, I actually prepared a differently cropped version of this painting to show on the front page of my website. It's crazy how much you can change a painting simply by cropping it differently!

I enjoy the contrast between the rather cheerful surroundings and the dark theme. You can't quite figure out whether she's just unthinkingly curious and destructive, or honestly doesn't care. Someone once commented to me that little girls (or the entire female species in general) can be a truly scary thing...

I couldn't agree more!

Artist Portfolio





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